

## Celebrating the past, looking toward the future

**Amy S. Anthony and Helene Solomon honored at Eighth Annual Founders Celebration.**

Last fall, MBHP honored two individuals for their outstanding contributions to the field of affordable housing. The event was hosted by State Street and raised more than \$190,000 to support MBHP programs, thanks to the efforts of the Leadership Committee, chaired by Lawrence H. Curtis, Joseph L. Flatley, and Marvin Siflinger.

“This is a huge honor and a very special time for me,” said Anthony, who recently retired as president and chief executive officer of Preservation of Affordable Housing. She reminded the attendees about the amount of work still to do in addressing the current housing crisis in the Boston area. “We have so far to go. We have so much to do. We have so much undone in this field,” she said, adding, “We all have an obligation to make sure that we do everything we can to make it fair, to make it equitable, to maximize the benefit to all those people, many of whom are not lucky enough to get the help they need.”

“I’m touched beyond belief,” said Solomon, who is the chief executive officer of Solomon McCown & Company. She also reflected on her friendship with Lowell and its



(Left to right) MBHP Executive Director Chris Norris, Event Co-Chair Joseph Flatley, Founders Awardee Amy Anthony, Event Co-Chair Lawrence Curtis, Lowell Richards Awardee Helene Solomon, and Event Co-Chair Marvin Siflinger at the Eighth Annual MBHP Founders Celebration.

impact on her career. “With a role model like Lowell,” said Solomon, “I realized that maybe I could do something also.” She also took time to recognize Richards’ lasting impact on the City of Boston, saying, “To never stop thinking of improving our city, advocating, cajoling, getting things done through partnerships: that was Lowell. That’s MBHP.”

“It is my pleasure to recognize the outstanding efforts of both Amy and Helene,” said Chris Norris, MBHP executive director. “Each has made a lasting impact on the well-being of individuals and families throughout the region and beyond. We are very

fortunate to have them as allies in our work to ensure that families and individuals in our region can find a safe, affordable place to call home.”

Jay Ash, Massachusetts secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, also spoke at the event. “I’ve had the pleasure of working with all of you to support MBHP and the great work that it does in our communities,” said Ash. “It’s great to be involved together in an organization that is making a difference in the lives of people, making sure that the quality of life of people who need just a little bit of assistance is realized.”



## Mission statement

MBHP's mission is to ensure that the region's low- and moderate-income individuals and families have choice and mobility in finding and retaining decent affordable housing; all of our programs and initiatives are designed to encourage housing stability, increase economic self-sufficiency, and enhance the quality of the lives of those we serve. To achieve our mission and to promote efficient service delivery, we work collaboratively with a broad array of service providers and neighborhood-based organizations.

## MBHP's programs

MBHP empowers families and individuals to move along the continuum from homelessness to housing stability. Serving more than 20,000 households annually, we work seamlessly to bridge the gaps among government, nonprofits, and corporations to continually increase our impact. With more than 30 years' experience piloting and implementing housing programs, we have solidified our position as an industry-leading expert on navigating the affordable housing field.

Our broad array of programs and services, as well as our extensive network of property owners and fellow service providers, allow us to address a wide range of housing-related issues, from preventing evictions and homelessness, to helping people find suitable homes, to making rent more affordable.

For more information on the many programs and services we administer, visit online us at [www.mbhp.org](http://www.mbhp.org) or call our Housing Consumer Education Center at 617.425.6700.

## FSS report released

### The University of Massachusetts Boston Center for Social Policy has released a report on the success and challenges of MBHP's Family Self-Sufficiency Program.



MBHP FSS Program Manager David Kelley (left) with FSS graduate Nance Kasongo at the 2014 Founders Celebration.

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) is a national program available to Section 8 participants and people in public housing to help them save money and reach their career and financial goals. CSP's evaluation found that outcomes of MBHP's FSS program exceed the national average on almost every count, including higher enrollment rates, higher levels of escrow accumulation, and lower termination rates.

MBHP's success was attributed in part to our collaborative approach. Through co-locating our services with CONNECT in Chelsea, we are able to recruit a number of participants. Through our extensive network of service providers, we can connect participants with resources they need to achieve their goals.

The report included policy recommendations to address some of the challenges faced by FSS participants: increasing wages, improving working conditions in the business community, and investing in workforce development programs.

The study was funded by The Boston Foundation, who in 2010 provided MBHP with a five-year \$500,000 grant to expand the FSS program in the Fairmount Corridor. During the grant period, participants in this area accumulated a total of \$2.7 million in estimated annual earnings, and the authors predict that, over time, the grant will result in about \$630,000 in escrow payments to graduates.

"We are very excited about this report's findings," said David Kelley, MBHP FSS Program Manager, "both because of what it says about the strengths of MBHP's program, as well as the recommendations it makes to make the program even stronger. We hope this will lead to policy change that lowers the barriers faced by people in Greater Boston who are working so hard to increase their incomes and become self-sufficient."

Read the full report at [www.mbhp.org/family-self-sufficiency-program](http://www.mbhp.org/family-self-sufficiency-program).

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT: Geeta Pradhan

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Geeta Pradhan began her career in architecture and urban design, but from the beginning, community development and sustainability were guiding passions. These led her to The Boston Foundation, where she served as Associate Vice President, and Cambridge Community Foundation, where she now serves as President.

“You have to believe you can create change,” says Pradhan. “You have to believe you can make a difference.” And Pradhan certainly has.

Pradhan first connected with MBHP during the foreclosure crisis of 2008, when large numbers of MBHP Section 8 participants were facing eviction from foreclosed properties in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan. The Boston Foundation multi-pronged strategy administered a Neighborhood Stabilization Fund



to purchase distressed properties, funded advocacy, and supported MBHP to help tenants to remain in place. From this first partnership, her relationship with MBHP grew.

“During conversations with Chris Norris about struggling families” says Pradhan, “we laid the groundwork for The Boston Foundation’s investment in MBHP’s Family Self-Sufficiency Program with a five-year grant to expand MBHP’s

FSS enrollment in the Fairmount Corridor to help 500 families build their income and assets.”

“I saw everyone doing their bit in Fairmount, the work coalescing,” says Pradhan. “Philanthropy can play a big role in that, by helping community organizations work together towards greater good.”

Pradhan continues this tradition today. Recently, the Cambridge Community Foundation has pledged support to MBHP’s Hoarding Intervention initiative, which will help low-income elders in Cambridge and beyond to maintain safer homes and age in place with dignity.

Pradhan is a proud supporter of MBHP. “MBHP’s amazing work speaks a lot for the organization’s values. MBHP is well poised for collaborative work on critical issues of housing and economic mobility.”

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## Thanks Ropes & Gray!

MBHP is grateful to once again receive the support of Ropes and Gray, whose staff members came together to donate more than 200 children’s winter coats. MBHP delivered these gift-wrapped coats to the homeless families placed in motels in our region.

“We’re so proud to work with Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership on the Bundle Up Holiday Project. We understand just how important it is for young kids to stay warm all winter



long, and we choose to work with them because we’re always impressed with the caliber of the thought and planning their

organizers put into their programs,” said Launa Allen of Ropes & Gray. “They’re a really perfect partner.”

## Staying healthy at home



Changes included an exterior stair lift to help him get in the house, a new bathroom on the first floor, and the new deck. The changes have made a huge impact on Salvatore's well-being and his health—he has even reported the return of some of his sight.

"I've never been happier in my life," says Cheryl. She says Salvatore's whole quality of his life has improved. Salvatore agrees that he has everything he needs. "You couldn't make it any better than this," he says.

**Salvatore wanted to live at home with his family. Thanks to MBHP's Home Modification Loan Program, he can do just that.**

Salvatore hadn't been outside the house in years. His health issues, including partial blindness, made it difficult for him to get around. But last summer, he enjoyed many meals outside on a brand new deck, just one of the many improvements made possible by MBHP's Home Modification Loan Program.

After a bad fall four years ago, Salvatore needed round-the-clock assistance. In 2015, Salvatore decided to move out of his home and across the street to live with his daughter, Cheryl, and her husband. Through the state-funded program, Cheryl was able to make their family home a safe place for her father to live.



## Attention MBHP alums: We want to hear from you!

As we approach our 35th anniversary, MBHP is looking to get in touch with former board members, staff members, and supporters to capture their stories. Help us reconnect!

Over the next few months, we will be holding events and other opportunities to help MBHP "alums" connect with us and each other. You can help us spread the word. If you know of anyone who

might be interested in getting back involved, ask them to let us know.

Contact Steve Farrell at [steven.farrell@mbhp.org](mailto:steven.farrell@mbhp.org) or 617.425.6673.

### Thank you to our recent grant funders

Citizens Bank Foundation • Cambridge Community Foundation • Linde Family Foundation  
Blue Hills Bank Charitable Foundation • Santander Bank

## Meet MBHP's 2016 Boston Marathon team

For the ninth year running, thanks to the John Hancock Boston Marathon Non-Profit Program, a group of volunteers will be competing in the Boston Marathon and raising funds and awareness for MBHP.

This year's team of five includes three MBHP staff members: RAFT Case Manager Lourdes Lopez, FSS Advisor Maksim Sigal, and Program Representative Siomara Sanchez-Lobo. Rounding out the team are Ruston Lodi, who is running for the second year in a row, and Mairead Kean.



(Left to right) Mairead Kean, Lourdes Lopez, Rus Lodi, Maksim Sigal, and Siomara Sanchez-Lobo.

You can help Team MBHP reach their goal! Visit [www.crowdrise.com/mbhp2016](http://www.crowdrise.com/mbhp2016) to make a donation, or donate a raffle prize for one of our upcoming fundraisers. Contact Mary Jo Kane at [maryjo.kane@mbhp.org](mailto:maryjo.kane@mbhp.org) or 617.425.6705 for more information on how you can get involved.

## Welcome new board members

**MBHP is pleased to announce the addition of two new individuals to our board of directors: Joseph Kriesberg, president and chief executive officer of the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations, and Mike Widmer, former president of the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation.**

"MBHP does so much to provide that foundation to so many that I am thrilled to have the chance to help enhance and strengthen those efforts as a board member," said Kriesberg.

"I am delighted to join the Board of such an outstanding organization which has developed a remarkably impressive array of programs and services on behalf of affordable housing," said Widmer.



Joseph Kriesberg



Mike Widmer

*everyone deserves a place to call home*

### MBHP Board of Directors

<b>Co-Chairs</b>	Elizabeth Gruber
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## Annual Report 2015 is available online

Each year, MBHP helps more than 20,000 households connect with resources to secure safe homes they can afford. In part, we accomplish this by tapping into our extended network. Whether administering a voucher to make rent more affordable, connecting someone with career development services to increase earnings and save more, or loaning money to help someone with a disability stay in their home, MBHP staff exhaust every avenue in order to navigate our clients through the vast and often confusing world of affordable housing.

You can read the stories of just a few of the thousands of people we helped last year in our 2015 Annual Report, available online at [www.mbhp.org/annual-report-2015](http://www.mbhp.org/annual-report-2015).

