

club news

WEST END HOUSE
BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF ALLSTON/BRIGHTON
spring 2004 | volume 2



Endowment Challenge... We did it!

The recent history of the WEH Boys & Girls Club has been filled with exciting changes and dynamic growth. The new Lewis and Gordon Clubhouse, made possible by the generous donations of Henry Lewis, Alan Lewis, and James Gordon, stands proudly on Allston Street and its bright and cheery façade welcomes young people each day. New programs abound in this facility as youth are exposed to community service, educational programs, digital arts, ballet, theater, visual arts, athletics, and much more. As the board of directors plans ahead, the future looks bright.

The success of the recent Endowment Campaign is part of the reason for this

confidence. In 2003, an anonymous foundation promised a contribution of \$750,000 to our endowment if WEH Boys & Girls Club leadership could raise \$1.5 million. Led by an ambitious board of directors, this task has been completed and the WEH Boys & Girls Club endowment now has an additional \$2.25 million.

Alan Lewis led the charge with a gift of \$900,000, the largest received in the endowment campaign. Long-time Club supporter Jack Hornstein, who just celebrated his 95th birthday, came through before the challenge deadline with a gift of \$18,000 to close the gap and meet the goal. As Board President Charles Rodgers noted, "The success

of this campaign is only the most recent indication of the tremendous vitality of this unique institution and its increasingly broad base of support in the community."

While the past few years have been uncertain in the

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Making fitness fun in the new dance studio.

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A Night to Honor

**WEH Boys & Girls Club Heroes...
June 16th 2004 Past Presidents
George Kane, Joel Goober, and
Henry Barr**

Upstairs in the Louis I. Kane Youth Leadership Center of the WEH Boys & Girls Club, a timeline depicts the Club's long history from 1906 to present day. The Club has flourished under the strong leadership of many who have been determined to see it succeed.

These leaders have advanced the mission, surmounted obstacles in their path, and rallied teams of support in times of crisis. Our annual Night to Honor dinner will celebrate three past board presidents who embody the ideals of leadership and perseverance.

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Following in his footsteps... Brian Honan Fellows hold their first Service Saturday

If you looked into the windows of the Clubhouse on Saturday January 21, you would have seen an unusual sight. Teenagers and senior citizens were spending the day together, playing cards, participating in workshops, having lunch, and just enjoying each other's company.

It was the first "Service Saturday," coordinated by the ten teenagers who are this year's Brian Honan Fellows. During this event, Honan fellows listened and



Steve Syvilay and Luis Lopez discuss their aspirations with 'Silver-haired Legislator' Alexander Gricus.

conversed with seniors as information was shared about community activism and how to make Allston-Brighton a better place for the elderly and families. Eighteen year-old Leo Law spent the service Saturday with an elderly couple who spoke Mandarin. Senior Center staff member Millie McLaughlin remarked at how rare and gratifying it was for them to be able to speak their native tongue.

The members of the Brian Honan Fellowship, age 14-18, have formed a tight-knit group. Their mission? To learn about and promote civic engagement, to plan and implement Club and community service activities, and to lead and influence change in their neighborhood. Fellowship Coordinator and Club staff Kristin Pineo remarked, "They are a dynamic group, filled with humor and a desire to bring about positive changes in their own backyard."



Mark and Sophie Bao converse with Leo Law about life in China.

A recent grant from Harvard University will help to support and enhance the Honan Fellowship. Harvard has pledged \$40,000 per year for next three years.

Future projects will be focused on the themes of affordable housing and homelessness. Gerry Walsh, board member and advisor on the Honan Fellowship Committee, said, "What better way to keep a memory alive than having youth develop their own sense of community pride?" In their works, he lives on.

A Night to Honor [from page 1]

Please join us at Harvard's Spangler Center on June 16th 2004, as we pay tribute to George Kane, Henry Barr, and Joel Goober. The celebration will be a night to honor and a night to remember. The cocktail reception begins at 5:30 PM. Dinner begins at 6:30 PM.

The WEH Boys & Girls Club is indebted to the Night to Honor Committee for making this a wonderful event each year. Members of the committee include Debbie Black, Sid Boorstein, Steve Curley, Karen Gould, Bill Margolin, Lois Nathan, Charles Rodgers, Daniel Romanow, and Norman Weinberg. For more information on attending the event, please call Bill Margolin at 617 787 4044 x 18.

Endowment Challenge [from page 1]

financial markets, returns are guaranteed to those who have invested in the future of our Club, our community, and our kids. Each gift will pay its returns in the leaders, teachers, innovators, writers, doctors, and engineers nurtured at the WEH Boys & Girls Club this year and in years to come. Donors to the endowment have ensured that for next generations, *the spirit of the house will never die.*

Runners Travel to Ireland and Raise Funds for the Club

H ave you always wanted to cross the finish line of a marathon? Join a group of first time and experienced runners who are working to achieve this goal, all while helping the WEH Boys & Girls Club raise funds for youth programs.

The Club is organizing a team to run the Dublin Marathon in October 2004 and will provide weekly training, group runs, support, and travel as runners raise funds. Many local individuals, including two from Allston-based The Briar Group, are a part of the team.

The Club is not a stranger to marathon training. As an official charity of the Boston Marathon from 2001-2003, The WEH Boys & Girls Club trained eighty runners and raised a total of \$225,000 over the three-year period. This year, the team has set their sites on the marathon that traverses Ireland's scenic capital.

Nothing can beat the thrill of completing 26.2 miles! Interested? Our next meeting is at the Club on April 29, 6:30PM. For information, please contact Kristin Morlok, 617 787 4044 x 29.

Board Profile: Pramila Vivek

"The West End House is a place for children seeking a safe, loving, nurturing and fun-filled environment under the caring eyes of a committed and dedicated staff," says Pramila Vivek, West End House's newest member of the Board of Directors.

Vivek's involvement with WEH began when her son, Siddhartha, was a club member. A resident of the Allston-Brighton area for 26 years, Vivek has seen first hand how West End House impacts community youth.

Currently working at Harvard Medical School, Vivek has been with Harvard

University for 25 years. In 1992, she co-founded the International Health Organization, a nonprofit group dedicated to improving the standards and quality of life for the disadvantaged people of South Asia. She strongly feels that improved health for people in developing countries is a prerequisite for economic and social development.

When Pramila Vivek came to this country in the early 1970s, she had already earned a Master's Degree in Comparative Literature and taught college for a year in her native India. She also has a graduate degree in Educational Policy and Curriculum

Development from the University of Wisconsin, and, as she puts it, "twenty years and two sons later, I obtained an MPH from the Harvard School of Public Health." As time permits, she performs Indian classical music, and loves to cook, knit, and read.

Pramila's passion will always be bringing resources to those who need it most. She says, "I will continue as long as possible to work in health and development programs that benefit the poorest people." The WEH Boys & Girls Club is fortunate to have Pramila as a new member of the team!

Spring Programs Come Alive at the Club

This spring, West End House Boys & Girls Club is bursting with activity. You'll find kids doing hip-hop and salsa, practicing yoga and drum-line, and experimenting with poetry and theatre. A new menu of classes reflects the growing diversity of our membership and complements more traditional offerings in the gym, pool, and education center.



Sami Yu and Jennifer Yu (no relation) practice for the national competition.

Dance and Theater

Thanks to Wendy Kinal, new performing arts instructor, dance classes in the Louis I. Kane Youth Leadership Center are peppered with lessons in the culture and history of Africa, Asia, and South



Felorah Jackson improves her typing skills.

America. Wendy's classes are interactive and expose kids to an alternative pathway to self-expression and fitness. Later in May, the kids will present a dramatic performance. These programs are possible with support from the Boston Foundation.

Swim Team

Fifteen swimmers, led by coaches Siria Vazquez and Luis Chuga, are putting in double practices to prepare for their trip to the Boys and Girls Club of America's National Competition in Florida. WEH swimmers are actively fundraising to help finance their trip to the Sunshine state.

Technology

Travel is also on the calendar for talented club youth who entered the Boysand Girls Club of America Digital

Arts Festival. Kids are creating web pages and digital movies based on the theme "Diversity in the Club." A recent grant and donations from BestBuy are helping to make these programs possible. Yelithzah Galvez, age 12, created a movie set to music with images of youth from diverse backgrounds engaging in activities together at the Club. She and other finalists will travel to the Digital Arts Festival this spring. As they manipulate digital images and web technology, Club youth are entering a whole new world of expression.



'Tree pose' - youth experience yoga.

Sponsors Corner

Thank you to the many corporate sponsors and foundations that have supported youth at the West End House Boys & Girls Club over the past four months. In-kind donations have helped to improve programs through new field trips and supplies and financial contributions have expanded program resources. Below is a list of both corporate and foundation support:

Allston-Brighton Community Fund
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Boston University

Boston College Neighborhood Center
Boston Department of Neighborhood Development
Briar Group
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