

**bcf**

BROOKLINE COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION



COMMUNITY  
**impact**

**ANNUAL REPORT • JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024**





# consistency

Dear Brookline Community,

**We achieved several big milestones** at the Brookline Community Foundation (BCF) this year: We unveiled a first-ever Understanding Brookline database to help our community track and address local realities, relaunched our Executive Directors Roundtable to enable peer leadership support and collective problem-solving among the town's nonprofits, celebrated 10 years of support to recent Brookline High School grads through the BCF Scholarship Fund for Brookline High School, and launched two new community-centered funds, the Chobee Hoy Fund for Brookline and Edna Mann Memorial Scholarship Fund for Social Justice and Equity. We made 61 grants and scholarships this year too, and we sold our building at Webster Place, a strategic decision that will strengthen BCF's impact and capacity to continue meeting our mission going forward.

**While each of these accomplishments is worth celebrating**, we're equally proud of a less visible achievement: our consistency.

**It's been a challenging time for many in our community** as the costs of food, housing, and childcare continue to rise and as local nonprofits stare down a significant loss of funding when federal relief grants sunset in the coming years. Meanwhile, at BCF, we continue to show up for our community as a grantmaker, convener, philanthropic partner, champion and, for some, a lifeline.

**This year, we're proud to sustain our position as a reliable resource** for the organizations that form the fabric of our community, addressing critical needs and opening doors to empowerment, opportunity, and wellbeing. We're excited to form new partnerships, too. In 2024, BCF received a record number of grant applications from a truly diverse group of organizations. As a community foundation, we understand that we are often the only source of funding for existing and emerging leaders who are innovating, taking chances, and putting a stake in our community's stability and its future.

**This is our purpose at BCF.** We serve as a cornerstone and connector for our community, an early investor, and a reliable long-term resource, every year, no matter the conditions. We're able to play these roles so consistently because we're part of a loyal network of donors, supporters, and friends who understand the importance of giving locally, giving regularly, and of pooling our individual strengths and resources to achieve collective community impact.

**We thank you** for making a commitment to community impact in Brookline in 2024. We do so much more for and with our community when we invest and act together.

In gratitude and partnership,

ABA TAYLOR  
Executive Director



# vision

A better Brookline for all

# mission

The Brookline Community Foundation creates opportunity and promotes equity through the transformative power of giving

# values

**LEAD BY LISTENING** • Listening helps us deeply understand community strengths, challenges, needs, and opportunities so we can be an effective collaborator and partner.

**ANCHORED IN EQUITY** • Equity is the vision we're working towards and the process we're using to get there that helps hold us accountable to our community and ourselves.

**SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT** • Sustainability is crucial for our nonprofits, our neighbors, and our own organization. Investing in Brookline lets us address needs today and well into the future.

**COMMUNITY FIRST** • Our community guides our work. We use your insights and guidance to design and refine our work so we can reach our shared goals together.



our collective

# impact

GRANTEES

JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024

2Life Communities  
Abilities Dance Incorporated  
Art Barn Community Theater, Inc.  
Boston Bhangra, Inc  
Boston Worker's Circle Center for Jewish Culture & Social Justice  
Breaktime  
Brookline Arts Center  
Brookline Center for Community Mental Health  
Brookline Council on Aging/Brookline Multi-service Senior Center Corporation  
Brookline Dept of Public Health & Human Services  
Brookline Early Education Program  
Brookline Food Pantry  
Brookline Housing Authority

Brookline Improvement Coalition Inc. (also known as BCDC)  
Brookline Interactive Group (BIG)  
Brookline Recreation Department  
Brookline Teen Center  
Brookline.News  
Building Bridges Education Inc  
Charles River Watershed Association  
Climate Change Action Brookline Inc  
College Affordable Inc  
Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation, Inc.  
Discovering Justice - James D. St. Clair Court Public Education Project  
Emerald Necklace Conservancy  
FamilyAid Boston  
Heath School PTO

Her Wings First INC  
Horizons for Homeless Children  
Jewish Family and Children's Services  
MAB Community Services, Inc.  
Martin Trust Partnership in Education for Early Learners  
My Life My Choice  
ODEICR - Brookline Asian American Family Network  
ODEICR - Brookline Muslim Friends  
Puppet Showplace Theater  
Springwell, Inc.  
Steps to Success, Inc.  
Studios Without Walls  
Tactical Reintegration Project Inc.  
Town of Brookline/Public Schools of Brookline  
Women Thriving, Inc.

# 758

DONORS RAISED

# \$2,436,744

to support the Brookline community through BCF's grantmaking, capacity-building, convening, and research initiatives.

# 97

ORGANIZATIONS, COMMUNITY GROUPS & STUDENTS RECEIVED

# \$1,097,639

in grants, sponsorships & scholarships.





## 2024 BCF Highlights

- **Introduced** first-ever Understanding Brookline database
- **Held** 15 Understanding Brookline community engagement events
- **Raised** over \$2M in ARPA funding
- **Secured** a \$225K Cummings Foundation grant, one of our largest private grants in recent years
- **Resumed** Executive Directors Roundtable with town leaders
- **Celebrated** 10 years of the BCF Scholarship Fund for Brookline High School
- **Launched** the Chobee Hoy Fund for Brookline and Edna Mann Memorial Scholarship Fund for Social Justice and Equity
- **Created** B.GREAT program, including first-ever cultural event sponsorships
- **Launched** our inaugural Parkfest
- **Introduced** new BCF newsletter
- **Held** first family philanthropy event for donors
- **Participated** in town-wide community health improvement process





## Brookline Food Pantry

# FOOD FOLKS CAN COUNT ON

“There are a lot of Brookline residents who couldn’t afford all the food they need if they weren’t able to come to us every week,” says Brookline Food Pantry Executive Director Elizabeth Boen. “We really want to be a consistent food source so people can rely on us.”

The Brookline Community Foundation has helped the Brookline Food Pantry maintain that consistency in a period of exceptional need. Prior to 2020, about 175 residents visited pantry sites each week. Today, nearly 700 residents seek weekly food support, similar to peak pandemic levels. Regular clients include seniors on fixed incomes and working parents struggling to balance the rising costs of housing, health care, and groceries.

This year, a BCF grant helped sustain and grow the Brookline Thrives program, which provides 550 Brookline school children with take-home backpacks each Friday for the weekend—up from 150 kids pre-pandemic. “The need has not diminished there at all,” says Boen. “It’s a very busy and vital program.”

Each backpack contains individually portioned lunches, shelf-stable beverages, healthy snacks, and fresh fruit. “The parent and child know exactly how much food to expect and what to expect in the bag,” says Boen. Parents express special appreciation for a regular supply of fruit and snacks,

two food categories that have spiked with inflation.

The Food Pantry provides organic items whenever possible and customizes bags for children who keep kosher, are vegetarian, or have food sensitivities. “These children really are in need,” says Boen, “And because we have this money from BCF, we’re able to be particular with these hand-picked items. We never have to say, ‘We’re sorry’ to anybody.”

The feedback on Brookline Thrives has been overwhelmingly positive. “Teachers have reached out to say what a difference they see in the attitude of a child who has had plenty to eat all weekend,” Boen says. “They’re able to sit and focus with the rest of the class. They have their homework done. They’re ready to learn with their peers.”

Boen is proud of how the Food Pantry has risen to meet the needs of Brookline kids and families in this tough economic period. Like many nonprofits, the Food Pantry faces a funding cliff when federal pandemic relief funds sunset. “It’s a big concern,” Boen says. “Having a reliable partner like BCF is helpful in times like this.”

In addition to the continued fiscal support, Boen appreciates BCF’s role as a convener, connector, and source of friendly advice. “I feel like there’s always someone to turn to at BCF,” Boen says. “BCF is always there to help local nonprofits.”



**‘Our clients rely on us as a consistent source of nutritious**

# food.

**BCF grants provide the money we need to remain consistent.’**





**Brookline Housing Authority**

# BUILDING PATHWAYS TO EMPOWERMENT



“When you can see a path forward economically, it’s a game changer,” says Danielle Mendola, Resident Services Program Director at the Brookline Housing Authority (BHA). “Whole families can move out of poverty.”

As the largest provider of affordable housing in Brookline, BHA helps to sustain socioeconomic diversity in our community. But BHA offers much more than affordable apartments and rental subsidies. It works with partner organizations, including the Brookline Community Foundation and many of our grantee-partners, to provide residents with stabilizing resources and opportunities to access economic mobility.

“BHA works in partnership with many other providers to close resource gaps—everything from food to education to childcare and so on. It’s very intentional and coordinated work on both an individual and a systems level,” says Mendola.

**“BCF has been invaluable, giving the financial assistance we need to help residents invest in their long-term**

Most of the BHA’s wraparound services would not exist without local philanthropy. “BCF has been instrumental as both seed funding and sustained support to continue and expand our on-site case management,” Mendola explains.

BCF has been a leading funder to support BHA’s Self-Sufficiency Program, which provides education, coaching, and scholarships that help residents advance their skills and financial prospects. Participants typically begin the program with negative assets and little month-to-month margin. Through the program, they can earn up to \$15,000 in escrow savings toward a down payment on a home or other financial or educational goals. A dedicated coach works with participants one-to-one to clarify their goals and the action steps to reach them.

“When you don’t start out with a lot, the road out of poverty can feel daunting,” says Mendola. “We provide structure, support, and a savings mechanism to help families through those challenges.”

Since its launch in 2021, more than 60 individuals have enrolled in the Self-Sufficiency Program. On average, graduates have doubled their earnings and accrued an average of \$8,000 in

savings. Some have gone on to purchase homes. Mendola sees the sense of hope spreading throughout the BHA community.

“We want folks to gain a sense that what I do can make a difference in my life,” says Mendola. “Our residents have a lot of capacity. When that’s untapped, they can feel stuck. But if we can be intentional about opening doors and providing support so they can get training and increase their incomes, it makes the community as a whole better off.”

Mendola notes a parallel between what BHA’s consistent support can mean for residents and the BHA’s relationship with BCF. “These multi-year awards from BCF provide room to dream beyond the short term. You can start asking the questions like, What if we could ensure that all needs are met? What if we could have a network of providers working together to close opportunity and resource gaps and make more of a level playing field here in Brookline?”

As BHA also looks ahead at a federal funding cliff, reliable community support has become even more essential. “Local philanthropy is critical to ensure that we’re not retreating,” says Mendola, “that we’re not moving back from the work that’s begun.”

# Success’





‘People need  
**art**

**in their lives.  
They need  
food, they need  
housing. They  
need joy. Art is  
part of the whole  
picture.’**



## **Studios Without Walls**

# ART IS A PUBLIC GOOD

“Studios Without Walls is a service and a gift,” says Bette Ann Libby, founder and contributor to the Brookline-based arts collaborative. “Our art is stimulating. It’s fun. It gives people a different conversation.”

Studios Without Walls began as a small group of artists creating public installations through Brookline Open Studios. Today, the group is best known for its annual outdoor sculpture exhibition at the

Riverway Park. This year, a BCF grant supported two open-access art projects in Brookline—a new Riverway Park exhibit and a series of roadside banners produced with another BCF grantee-partner, Gateway Arts. The bulk of the funds went directly to participating artists.

“It really gives artists credibility to pay them,” Libby says. “We’re making it a model for other art exhibits to pay artist stipends.”

Since Studios Without Walls began paying its artists, Libby has noticed other exhibitions following suit.

This year, 17 artists created 16 outdoor sculptures for the “This is ART” exhibit in the Riverway. Most sculptures were constructed of upcycled materials and spoke to themes about the environment and broader world. A treasure hunt of rhyming clues created additional opportunities for public interaction.

The location is purposeful. “For people to have this oasis of art near the medical center is so important,” Libby explains. “They can walk over and get a break from their chemo or whatever is happening inside. When you get into Studios Without Walls, you’re in a different space. The art is beautiful. It gives you something to think about.”

Libby frequently hears from school groups, families, nature enthusiasts, and runners who make a point of visiting the annual installation. It’s intended for everyone. The outdoor setting

and deliberately interactive design provide maximum access to art for people of all ages and backgrounds.

“Some people are intimidated by museums,” says Libby. “Here, you can go with your kids. You don’t have to dress a special way or pay. It’s open. It’s easy. It gives families and friends a different way to be together.”

This year to mark its 25th anniversary, Studios Without Walls took on a new project in collaboration with Gateway Arts, funding 19 disabled artists to

paint a series of festive light pole banners to place on major roads throughout Brookline. “They signed up immediately,” Libby says. “The artists have been so excited about it.” The banners went up in May and remained on display through the summer.

This year’s exhibits attracted thousands of visitors and created new bonds among artists. “It’s been a great run,” says Libby. “I am so proud that the Brookline Community Foundation recognizes the importance of what we were doing. It’s a gift to the community.”



**Statement of Financial Position** as of June 30, 2024\*

**ASSETS**

Cash	\$781,906
Investment Assets	\$14,430,007
Net Pledge Receivables	\$192,250
Prepaid Expenses	\$26,908
Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trust	\$110,365
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$15,541,436</b>

**LIABILITIES**

Accounts Payable	\$4,463
Payroll Tax Liabilities	\$3,052
Deferred Revenue	\$20,580
Conditional Grant Advance	\$526,085
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$554,180</b>

**NET ASSETS**

Without Donor Restrictions	\$7,896,433
With Donor Restrictions	\$7,090,823
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$14,987,256</b>

<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$15,541,436</b>
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\* unaudited as of 8/1/2024



**This year, 758 donors made an impact in Brookline by giving locally and giving together. We thank you for these generous contributions to our community's current and future wellbeing.**

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We regret any errors and encourage you to contact us if you have questions about your gift.



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