Dear Friends, Families, and Funders:

This year was one of growth for Bird Street, even with shrinking grants and fewer resources. We launched four new satellite sites, three local elementary schools and our first ever middle school. We were awarded a first time “After School Out of School Time” grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We attracted outstanding new staff and we professionalized our Computer Lab. We connected with more parents and families and also provided more than 60 court-involved youth with a new start in life through our case management services and jobs program. More than 200 youth were hired for part-time year round and summer employment with the support of a host of public and private funders.

In spite of the economy, we increased our individual gifts and donations; and while our individual funding is still modest, our circle of supporters is definitely growing.

Finally, fiscal 2009 brought more than 1300 children and youth through our doors-young people whose lives are being changed with new opportunities, caring adults, and many options for programs, services and activities.

Together with all of the board members, staff, parents, and volunteers, we share the common dream for the success of every youth we engage.

Eric Kramer    Andrea Kaiser
Board President    Executive Director
History
In the early 1900s we began as the Bird Street Gym, owned and operated by the City of Boston. Budgetary constraints forced the City to close the gym in the 1970s. The residents of Upham’s Corner, recognizing a serious community need, organized to reopen the facility in 1978. Through a then-unique private-public partnership with the City of Boston, the residents transformed the abandoned City Gym into a non-profit, 501c3 youth center, which was run for a decade by volunteers. Over the past 32 years we have built upon our roots in athletics to develop a range of programming that meets the needs of our community including licensed after school care, gender specific programming, workforce development, academics, arts and humanities, and social/emotional mentoring. In 2009, Bird Street served more than 1300 children and youth ages 5-22 at 8 sites throughout the City of Boston with comprehensive before and after school care. Our programs emphasize academic supports and enrichment with an intentional focus on increasing self-sufficiency for our high-risk youth members.

Mission
To provide low income high-risk youth with all of the critical programs and services that allow inner city children and youth to rise above poverty, to become the first in their families to graduate from college, to lead the community as a place of peace and prosperity, and to thrive as the adults of tomorrow. Bird Street provides these programs and services in an environment that is youth-friendly, safe, and supportive of the potential that is possible when families, schools, and agencies work together to nurture the young.

Vision
Bird Street Community Center is the “hub” for children and youth who seek intellectual, physical emotional and personal growth and well being. Courts, social service agencies, schools and families trust Bird Street to help the community’s low income/high risk children achieve important life goals and grow into young adults who are community change makers and leaders. Bird Street is a major provider of intentional programming for out-of-school and after school activities. Generations of children and then their children find a safe and caring place for growing and developing character and skills.

What partnerships mean to Bird Street
Bird Street has developed strong partnerships across the neighborhoods and the City in an effort to strengthen programming and funding opportunities for our members. These partnerships allow youth to broaden their academic and career options, take on public issues of interest to teens and lead young people to become agents of change in the community. Our partnerships with colleges and universities, youth serving organizations and social service agencies, corporate, public and private funders, churches and non-denominational associations, and the courts and associated DCF and DYS case managers are responsible for the depth of services we provide and for the innovation we are able to pilot and integrate into our schedule.
Staff

Administration
Andrea Kaiser, Executive Director
Paulo Barros, Business Manager
Julia Bethmann Development Officer

School Age Child Care
Kathy Thomas, Director
Maurice Nobles, Jr., Curriculum Manager
Neil Harris, Site Coordinator
Brenda Reynolds, Site Coordinator
Steve Boutry, Site Coordinator
Jasmine Cox, Site Coordinator
Albert Flint, Teaching Associate
Kenya Frances, Teaching Associate
Andrea McLaughlin, Teaching Associate
Chanda Meloney, Teaching Associate
Maria Rosa, Teaching Associate
Shelela Smith, Teaching Associate
Liz Tucker, Teaching Associate
Derrick Ward, Teaching Associate

Youth Development
Shaun Harrison, Outreach Case Manager
Rahsaan Peters, Athletics Coordinator/Young Men's Group Leader
Matt Selines, Education and Leadership Manager (thru 2/09)
Shamekia Franklin, Education and Leadership Manager
Joyce Crawford, Girls Program Manager
Diana Cabrera, Young Women's Program Coordinator/Homework Room
Clifford Hill, Athletic Assistant
Rob Adams, Athletic Assistant
Alicia Linton, Girl's Program Coordinator/Membership
London Garry, Computer Lab Manager
Donkor Minors, Boys Group Leader

Enrichment Specialists
Dara Cheek, Artist-In-Residence
Moussa Traore & Allison Stamiris, African Drumming
Melinda Matthews, Fashion Design Instructor
Jim Klinkenberg, Chess Instructor
Laitia King, Hip-Hop Dance Instructor
Emmanuel Arrango, Step Instructor
Lino Delgado, Break Dancing Instructor
School Age Child Care

With a capacity building grant from The Boston Foundation, Bird Street spent the last two years increasing the impact of the SACC program. SACC grew from four to seven sites in 2009 serving more than 260 children ages 5-12. SACC provides academic support, physical activity, nutrition, art, chess, science, math, and literacy enrichment as well as social/emotional support for children before and after school. In addition to our main site at 500 Columbia Road, we now operate satellites at the David A. Ellis, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathan Hale School, Orchard Gardens K-8, and Ellis Mendell in Roxbury and the William E. Russell Elementary School in Dorchester.

Summer Day Getaway

Bird Street’s Summer Day Getaway is an extension of our SACC program, developed to meet the ongoing needs of families and children during the summer months. At Hale Reservation in Westwood, MA, we offer swimming, environmental science, athletics, arts and crafts, music, and other enrichment activities for 150 children ages 5-12. Children are bussed from Bird Street’s Columbia Road location to the Hale Reservation camp daily.

Sports Camp

The 2008 Sports Camp offered 60 campers ages 8-14 a daily experience with an athletics and reading focus. Campers met at Bird Street and the Mary Hannon Park in Dorchester to learn and play basketball, tennis, soccer, flag football and volleyball. They participated in discussions about healthy lifestyles, nutrition and were engaged with sports related reading activities. We trained and employed teens as coaches and referees. This program is among the most affordable in the City of Boston and allowed parents to work every day knowing that their children were safe and enjoying their summer.
Athletics

“Bird Street is basketball” for generations of Upham’s Corner residents. To expand the opportunities for children and youth to try new sports and maximize physical activity, Bird Street added a diverse range of competitive and non-competitive athletics, both intramural and leagues to the year round schedule in the gym. During 2009 this included: open gym, clinics, introductory sessions for new players, pee wee leagues, intramural play, girls teams, competitive leagues in basketball and soccer, tournaments, flag football, exercise classes, dance classes and clubs, volleyball, self-defense, tennis lessons and play, soccer lessons and play, dance - Hip Hop, Ballet, Modern, Jazz, Krumping, and training for youth to become paid coaches and referees.

Workforce Development

The most common request of teens at Bird Street is: “Can I get a job here?” This question comes up from youth as young as 12. The urge to become independent of parents, to become economically self-sufficient, and to become valued employees is very high on the list of “wants” our youth express. Two years ago, the Black Ministerial Alliance conducted a citywide study of high risk youth needs. Economic self-sufficiency was one of six identified priorities.

Every time a young person adds a new skill or certification to his/her resume, each time a young person is promoted to a position of more responsibility and authority, and each time a young person finds that the skills he/she learned at Bird Street are marketable in the general workplace, we know that we have made a huge difference in the lives of these youth.

We reach our workforce development goals by offering job readiness training, skill development, resume writing, interviewing skills, time management, proper dress, and appropriate workplace conversation workshops throughout the year. We provide nurturing adult supervision to provide encouragement, constructive criticism and positive feedback. We provide as many different job options as possible, so that when youth “age out” of Bird Street, they take marketable skills with them.

During this past school year, 90 youth worked 8-10 hours a week. In the summer of 2008, we celebrated the successful employment of 130 youth at our first Summer Gala Celebration at Roxbury Community College’s Theater. Bird Street is a lead partner and founder of the GOTCHA (Getting Off the Corner Hanging Around) Jobs Collaborative that has, over the last five years, grown from a summer jobs program to year round employment for hundreds of community young people.
Arts Entrepreneurship

Our Arts Entrepreneurship Programs have grown significantly for the last three years. In the summer of 2008, we provided 65 girls and boys with an 8-week summer intensive experience in either Boys Glass Arts, Girls Fashion Design, or Girls Dance. In the Arts Entrepreneurship Programs, girls and boys received in-depth training on the specific art form, technique classes and skills to market their performances or production art. All programs incorporated Small Business Development classes that produced individual business plans, marketing and branding, inventory tracking (for the Glass and Fashion programs), bookkeeping, and professional attitude. All programs met twice a week during the school year so participants could continue to work on their products/skills, develop their businesses, and sell their art. Youth earned commissions through consignment sales and performance fees, increasing their economic self-sufficiency.

In the fall of 2008, we began a new partnership with our first middle school, the Clarence Edwards in Charlestown, where we provided arts entrepreneur training in dance and fashion to 7th and 8th graders.
Education and Leadership

Bird Street’s Education Program focuses on academic support, academic enrichment, one-on-one tutoring, career opportunities, decreasing truancy, graduating from high school and successfully gaining admission to college. Most Youth Development members are required to visit the Homework Room daily and submit report cards at the end of each quarter. Starting with middle school, our Connections to College Program at Boston College helped students focus on study habits, organizational skills and preparation for attaining admission to the better public, private and charter schools in Boston. The Connections to College partnership with Suffolk University provided school year support for MCAS/SAT testing, one-on-one tutoring, college tours, assistance with college and financial aid applications, and mentoring. The Connections2College summer residential program at Suffolk University supported the academic achievement of 20 rising juniors and seniors who not only completed four college level classes but who also excelled in their State House internships and improved their SAT scores by as much as 200 points. When C2C began in 2005, we celebrated one youth heading off to college; today we are sending 35 or more high school graduates off to college, well prepared to meet the academic requirements and graduate.

An important goal of Bird Street’s Youth Development Program is to identify and nurture the leadership potential of every member. Bird Street sponsors the Upham’s Corner Youth Council for 20 high school teens who plan and implement activities that include: Annual Youth Summit, Youth Philanthropy Mini-Grant Project, Community Service Projects, and social activities. Youth Council members attend leadership trainings and sit on boards and committees of local coalitions and agencies as the voice for the youth at Bird Street. The Youth Council supported youth-driven community improvement projects, distributing $10,000. Bird Street also initiated a new Middle School Youth Council for 20 youth to learn about and prepare for leadership roles and engagement in community service. In 2009 this new group developed a mentoring program for younger children in our SACC program.
Gender Specific Group Mentoring

In 2009 gender specific groups for girls, boys, young women and young men met three to four times per week to address the increasing need for social/emotional supports among our highest-risk members. The curriculum for these groups was formalized to include three days of social/emotional support and one day per week of enrichment/recreation. This past year we hosted programs let by a clinician from the Upham's Corner Teen Health Clinic on topics such as grief/loss and personal identity. The fourth weekly meeting involved fun activities such as field trips, dance/physical activity, arts and crafts, poetry and other activities that reflect the interests of the participants.

Outreach Case Management

Our role as a referral site for the Dorchester Court has grown steadily in response to the high-quality of services and our success at engaging court-involved youth. In 2009 Bird Street’s Case Manager worked with 60 youth. Youth came to Bird Street from the Court for restitution, community service, anger management classes, emotional support, and conflict resolution. This involved one-on-one meetings two to three times per week as well as participation in court-related meetings and discussions with parents, caregivers, probation officers, and school personnel. We engaged court-involved youth in our gender specific group programs and helped the youth find other activities they would enjoy. With stipended and paid work opportunities, we were able to keep these high-risk youth engaged at Bird Street following the completion of their court-ordered obligations, so they could maximize the benefit from the academic and enrichment activities we offer. For most, this really was a turning point, and their work with our Case Manager played a critical role in decreasing the recidivism rate among this population.
Fundraising Report

The tightening economy presented significant challenges to Bird Street this past year. Although some funders gave less or not at all, many long-time funders continued their generous support. In addition, we were thankful to develop a number of new relationships this year including an important grant from Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, along with Massachusetts Cultural Council, The Ludcke Foundation, Procter and Gamble, Rutland Corner, and the Verizon Foundation. With the active involvement of our Board of Directors, the Annual Appeal was more successful than ever before, raising a record $30,000 from individuals. Finally, in-kind donations continued to play a role for the organization through our partnership with the City of Boston and numerous local businesses who support Bird Street through generous donations of food and services.
Individuals (continued)

Michael and Bridget Concagh
Francis Cregg
Patrick and Courtney Crowe
Colin and Rebecca Dillingham
Francis Fendell
Dr. Lewis Fendell
Kevin Toohey and Jessica Finney
Robert and Kathryn Finney III
Karyne Flores
Whitney French Seeburg
Paul Gamble
David Gillman
Susan Gold
Steven and Terry Golson
Daniel Field and Colleen Granahan
John and Ruth Ann Harris
Melissa and William Hartranft
Lucia Henderson
Calvert Social Investment
Andrea Kaiser
Byron and Kathryn Kalogerou
Gloria Kramer
Eric Kramer
Julia Kurtz O’Connor
Thuy Le
Marilyn and Paul Luongo
Lyn Lustig
Victor and Griselda Marchon, III
Ian McDuff
Carol McMullen Rush
Adam Muzikant
North Shore Unitarian-Universalist Church
Bill Nutting
T.W. and K.A O’Brien

Individuals (continued)

Lisa Owens
Maribeth Pender
Victor and Catherine Polk, Jr.
Glenn Rosenbaum
Barbara Rush
Philip Schlosser
Linda Schwabenbauer
Matt Seabrook
Raymond Sebold
Philip Silva
Jodi Smith
Ethan and Tracy St. Onge
Asha Strazzero-Wild
Sandra Goldsmith and Sheldon Toplitt
Raymond and Claudia Trammel
Joan Walls
Kenneth and Amy Willis
Mary Wissemann
Katherine Wolf
Christopher Wyle

In-Kind

City of Boston
Boston College
Boston Private Industry Council
Boston Youth Fund
Deland Gibson Insurance
Museum of Science
Suffolk University
Toys for Tots
Upham’s House of Pizza
Westwood High School

Outcome Measurement

2009 was our fifth year of outcome measurement reporting, which allowed us to take a long term view of some of our programs. We formalized the outcome measurement process into two annual reports: School Year and Summer. For seventeen of our Youth Development programs, participating youth completed the Youth Experiences Survey (YES 2.0) for the school year and the Youth Outcomes Toolkit for the summer. Staff completed Staff Observational Surveys at the end of each program term. We implemented a new tool, the Study of After School Youth Outcomes (SAYO) for the Dance Arts Entrepreneurship program, which provided useful pre and post program data. This report is available electronically. Please email jbethmann@birdstreet.org for your copy.