

BIRD STREET

500 Columbia Road, Dorchester, MA 02125 617-282-6110 www.birdstreet.org

ANNUAL REPORT



FY 2005

BSCC



**2004-2005
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Cleopatia "Cleo" Garrett, Site Coordinator
Katuska Ordonez, Teacher Associate

Hale After School Program:

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YOUTH DEVELOPMENT:

Kambiz Maali, Youth Development Director
Matthew Selines, Education Manager
Donna Woodson, Athletic Coordinator
Samira Kegler, Teen Girls Program Leader
Rahsaan Peters, Teen Boys Program Leader
Theodore "Teddy" Williams, Athletic Assistant
Stephen Puckerin, Girls Athletic Assistant

Program Volunteers: Thanks go out to more than 125 volunteers from Boston College, Boston University, City Year, City on a Hill Charter School, Harvard University, Harvard School of Public Health, International Exchange Students from Ireland, Jewish Community Relations Council, Northeastern University, NSTAR Electric Employees and Suffolk University.

“A Young Alum Speaks”



Jeff Barros, Class of 2005

Bird Street Community Center has been an essential and pivotal factor in my individual development and advancement. Bird Street was there for me when I moved into Dorchester in the early 1990s and now, in a new century, it continues to serve youth, not only around Dorchester but also throughout the City of Boston.

I am the youngest of three children, born to immigrant parents who came to Boston from the Cape Verde Islands in the 1970's. They began their residency working at multiple jobs in order to bring the entire family to the United States. My older brother Jackson, now 23, was a youth member of Bird Street, as was my sister, 19 year-old Jalisa.

I joined Bird Street when I was nine. At the time, violence and drugs were the two primary concerns of the Dorchester community. For me, Bird Street was a place to socialize and have fun without the fear of violence and/or the lure of drugs. After a period of two years, Bird Street became a daily habit and an indispensable feature in my social, physical and educational life style. Bird Street gave me a place to go after school and a place to expand my limited opportunities. I encountered tutors, mentors and more importantly, a staff and instructors that cared about my education and academic evolution.

Looking back, I'm saddened that my brother Jackson was finally lured by the streets and is now incarcerated. I ponder over the way things turned out. With the support from my parents and the daily influence of Bird Street, I diverted from my brother's path and created my own road map for success, driven by education. Bird Street took me off the streets and helped me mature to a point where I wouldn't allow anyone to take me off my course. Now that I am in my last year of high school and half way through my life path, I give thanks to Bird Street for your motivation and inspiration. Bird Street was there for me when I most needed it; and it is essential for Bird Street to be there in the future for others like me. Bird Street symbolizes safety (protection), education (teaching and learning), and support (mentorship and guidance); and if I hadn't been exposed to those variables, I do not believe I would be where I am today, about to graduate from high school and going on to college. Bird Street services the whole community, but more significantly, BSCC acts as a catalyst for other community centers following in its footsteps.

Letter from Board President, Keidi Carrington & Interim Executive Director, Andrea Kaiser

This year the focus for Bird Street has been on organizational changes leading to a greater capacity to serve. We tackled a four-month restructuring process for the administration and staff that resulted in a management team that can lead us through the transition into a new building. The Board took on a whole new life with the addition of eight business, corporate and community leaders. Our Resource Development Director stepped in as Interim, when our Executive Director left in January and carried us through a year in which the financial health of Bird Street grew steadily. The staff introduced a number of new initiatives that are now being permanently added to the schedule for fiscal 2006. For School Age Child Care, new programs included a written curriculum for literacy support and an experimental science course. For Youth Development, we introduced indoor soccer, pee wee sports, girls basketball team, certification for basketball referees and coaches, newsletter club, chess club, mentoring, a community service component, youth violence prevention, Connections to College, and money management. We strengthened the workforce development and youth leadership programs and added more life skills classes. Finally, we expanded our funding base by reaching out to new foundations, the corporate community and individual donors. In our efforts to build a new community center, we reached 59% of our \$11 million goal. It was a milestone year; and we appreciate the hard work and commitment of the board, staff, volunteers, parents, community support groups, agencies and more than 500 youth members.

School Age Child Care Program

The School Age Child Care Program (SACC) serves children ages 5-13 whose parents are working or in training programs. The weekday program meets from 2-6 PM and expands to full days during holidays and school vacations. The goal of the program is to provide a nurturing environment where youth can receive assistance with homework, literacy training, science, the arts and sports.

In September 2004, the SACC program opened a new site at the Nathan Hale Elementary School in Roxbury. We are currently providing services to 117 children at four sites (500 Columbia Road, Emerson Elementary School, Ellis Elementary School and Hale Elementary School), all located in the Roxbury and Dorchester neighborhoods.

Two new initiatives have been introduced into the SACC curriculum in 2004-2005. One focuses on strengthening reading skills by providing a structured and supportive literacy program that complements the reading and comprehension program in the Boston Public Schools. The second focuses on Science in the Classroom by giving students science activities that are fun and interesting. Using materials from the Youth Exploration in Science Project, the children are allowed to take part in hands-on experiments.



The SACC Summer Day Program served over 150 children during July and August. We incorporated themes of nature and water into daily field trips, which included swimming, cultural attractions and outdoor play. The Summer Program's 2004 theme was Water World. The children learned about the bodies of water, marine animals, conserving water, and ocean habitats. During the last week, the children took part in the Farms for City Kids Program in Vermont. The children were given the opportunity to experience the reality of living and working on a farm for a week.

Youth Development Program

The Youth Development Program offered nine areas of interest to nearly 500 youth ages 10-19 over the last twelve months. These tracks included: Academic Support and Education, Youth Leadership, Workforce Development, Recreation, Life Skills and the Arts, Athletics and Fitness, Youth Violence Prevention and Community Service. Highlights include:

The Mural Project: Located in the Bird Street Gym, the new mural, designed and painted by 15 Bird Street youth, is prominently displayed during games and special events. Completed in only 9 sessions, the mural represents the best in teen spirit.

Boys Group: BSCC partnered with the Boston Police Department to offer life skills and violence prevention programming for boys 11-14. Police Officers ran groups that dealt with gang involvement, respect for oneself and others, goal setting and anger management, all in a safe and friendly environment.

Girls Program: BSCC partnered with Northeastern University to provide a safe and welcoming program for girls ages 14 and over to talk about healthy relationships with boys, families and each other. Girls LEAP, Inc. provided self-defense and self-esteem building classes. Girls were encouraged to be physically active, focused, creative and intellectually challenged.

Chess Club: This was a new club for Bird Street, available to all levels of players. The games started out as intramural contests, but soon, the team will be ready for competition beyond the walls of Bird Street.

Girls Hip-Hop Dance: Whitney Low from Boston College's Pulse Program led a group of 10 girls in Hip-hop dance classes. This was the first year of organized dance programs at Bird Street and we anticipate expanding the program.

Middle School Money Club: Introduced girls to the concept of currency and how to manage money, utilize the services of a bank, spend wisely and save for the future.



Sports Program

The Sports Program provides a first time opportunity for some of our youth to participate in organized team sports and a chance to develop athletic and team building skills for all of our members. We have continued our basketball leagues for preteens (10-13), teens (14-16) and older teens (17-19). We also introduced new initiatives such as peewee basketball and soccer. We continue to place a strong emphasis on getting girls more involved in organized sports activities.

Dudley Park League: Dudley Park League is a community league that engages at risk youths in positive athletic sportsmanship. The teams are divided into two leagues, one for 16 and under, and one for 19 and under. 120 teens were served.

Travel Teams: Bird Street has two travel teams: one male, one female. They currently compete in the All Dorchester Sports League. Boys play on Sunday mornings and the girls play on Monday evenings. These are the only teams that require tryouts.

Pee Wee Basketball: Ages 5-10, two, 14-week sessions; First session, 25 children, Second session, 40 children.

Girl's League: March - April, 6-week sessions, 4 teams of girls ages 10 -16.

Girls Dance: We designed a dance program just for young girls ages 7-13 every Saturday at 12:30 PM and on Thursday evenings for girls ages 14 -18.

Girls Self-Defense: Every Monday from 4-6 PM, ages 7-14. This program was presented by Girl's LEAP, Inc.



16 & under League: January-March, one, 12-week session, 65-75 youths. The top four teams made the playoffs. One person received an MVP trophy, and one person received an all scholastic trophy. This league was designed for those young men who do not participate in basketball for school.

14 & under League: 66 teens participated, from September to early December. This in-house league was very competitive and exciting.

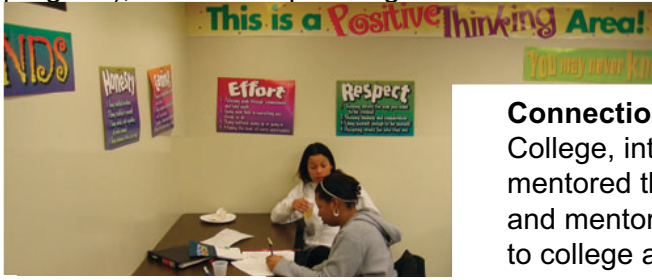
Friday Night League: 60 youths ranging in ages from 14 to 21 participated. This league was started to give area youth a place to "hang" and learn great sportsmanship. We had 60 youth participating in the league but many more came out just to watch their neighborhood team compete.

Pee Wee Soccer: January-February, 7-week session, 24 children participated in the league. Children learned to control the ball without using their hands. They also learned to kick, pass, and rely on their teammates to help move the ball up the floor in order to score goals.



Bird Street Community Center Education and Leadership Programs

Academic Support: Bird Street Community Center offered homework assistance, one-on-one tutoring, college preparation, MCAS and SAT test preparation, Connections to College (Boston College mentoring program), and career planning.



Homework Assistance: Homework room was open daily from 2:30 to 6:00 PM. Peer Leaders, City Year Corps members, BC PULSE Students and BU Volunteers provided one-on-one academic support.

High School Tutoring: Teens in grades 8-12 were encouraged to participate in our Monday and Wednesday night tutoring program. Tutors included volunteers from the Jewish Community Relations Council, Harvard School of Public Health, and Northeastern University. Emphasis was placed on MCAS and SAT preparation.



Connections to College: This program, in partnership with Boston College, introduced middle schoolers to college students who mentored them both at Bird Street and on Campus. Participants and mentors met twice a month setting goals, identifying roadblocks to college and creating pathways to success in the future.

Media Minds: BSCC offered two, 8-week modules of this interactive exploration of media and its effect on inner city teens. Designed by the YWCA, the curriculum allows teens to learn first hand about marketing, the media and how products and ideas are sold. Twenty-four participants completed the course.

Mentoring: Through this new initiative, 20 middle school boys and girls were matched with adult mentors for social and academic support. Matches were made and the actual meetings were scheduled to begin in June, 2005.

A Publication by Bird Street Community Center Newsletter Club

BIRD STREET NEWS

Newsletter Club: The BSCC Newsletter Club met every Monday and Wednesday from 3:45 to 5:30 PM. Participants created their own stories, investigating facts and following up on leads. Feature stories focused on current events and youth-centered Boston. Members in the Newsletter Club also participated in workshops, writing seminars, peer editing and field trips. Writers and editors received small monthly stipends.

Youth Council: For the third year, the Youth Council continued its work to provide programming feedback and youth activities in Center wide decision making. The Youth Council grew into a peer led activity.

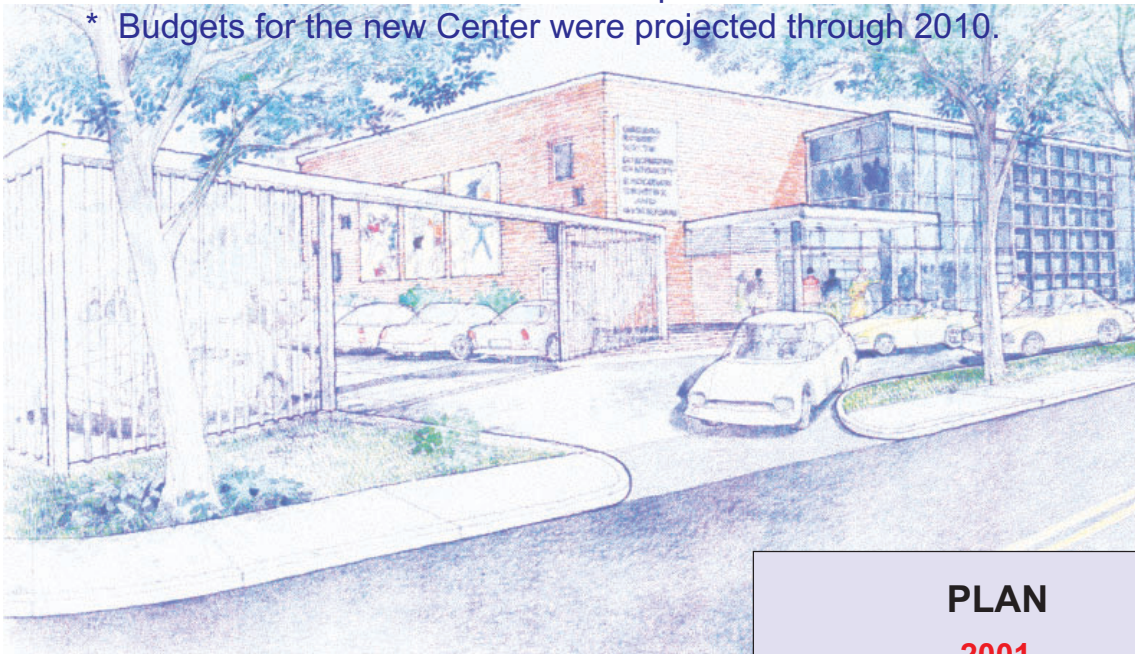
Workforce Development: This year, BSCC provided work opportunities to nearly 100 teens between the academic year and the summer. The program placed youth in important leadership positions within the Center and provided on-the-job training, basketball certification for coaches, assistants and referees, job readiness preparation, job fairs, workplace workshops, seminars, staff support and monitoring.

Community Service: More than 30 teens participated in community service projects that included Cradle to Crayons in Quincy and Community Servings in Boston.

BIRD STREET COMMUNITY CENTER DEVELOPMENTS

YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2005:

- * Business Plan to support new Center was completed.
- * Board hired A.J. Martini to conduct pre-construction activities
- * Budgets for the new Center were projected through 2010.



Capital Campaign Committee

Michael Flaherty, Liaison to the Board
President, Boston City Council
State Senator Jack Hart
State Representative Marie St. Fleur
State Representative Martin Walsh
Kevin Kiley, Mass Bankers Association
Todd English, Chef and Owner
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Capital Campaign Funding

(New Funders)

Anonymous Foundation
Anonymous Foundation
Boston Bruins Foundation
Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation
Florence Hagins
Liberty Mutual Group
Harold Whitworth Pierce Charitable Trust
New Markets Tax Credit Program

PLAN

2001

Establishment of Site Control

2003

**Completed Environmental
Analysis**

2004

**Completed Community Based
Planning for Project**

2004-2006

**Implement Capital campaign
to Fund UDCC**

2005

**Complete Design Development
and
Contract for Construction**

2006

**Begin planning for Occupancy
and Operation in New Facility**

2006-2008

Phased Construction



MISSION

The mission of the Uphams Corner Community Center, Inc. d/b/a Bird Street Community Center is to provide a hub for educational opportunities and life-long learning; recreation, sports and fitness; individual creativity through arts and culture and guidance and training for our youth, the leaders of tomorrow. With a focus on the Uphams-Dudley neighborhoods, BSCC strives to serve families and children through individual and intergenerational programs and services in a setting that welcomes everyone, regardless of age, physical ability, gender, culture or socio-economic status.

Thank you to all our supporters!

United Way Affiliate



| Where Community is Family!

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