

Celebrating the Holidays

The holiday season ushered in a flurry of activities and celebrations here at Project Place. In November clients, staff, family and friends gathered in the Commons to enjoy a delicious Thanksgiving lunch prepared by HomePlate. Turkey with all the fixin's was served, and we shared our thoughts of what we were thankful for. After the meal, turkeys donated by the **Greater Boston Food Bank** were given out to our clients.

Project Place supporters were also busy spreading the joy of the holidays. In early December, **Cities Unite** held its annual holiday party at the Greatest Bar in Boston, with all proceeds benefiting Project Place. An organization that encourages philanthropy among young Bostonians, Cities Unite will use the money to create gift baskets of basic necessities such as toiletries, phone cards and T passes for Project Place clients. Our staff was at the event to represent the agency and recruit volunteers.

Later in December clients, alumni, staff and board members celebrated the season at our annual Holiday Gathering. The turnout was fantastic and it was quite a festive celebration. Many clients courageously got up and spoke about their struggles and the positive impact of Project Place on their lives in the past year. The evening concluded with a gospel sing-a-long led by GateHouse tenant Vickie Williams. After the gathering, gifts were handed out to our clients for their children and their families. A variety of toys, books, art supplies and clothing were donated by the **City Mission Society** and **Dr. Joanne Falzone and her students from Tufts Dental School**. The Project Place family gives many



Project Place employees Caitlin O'Brien, Carol Reid and Rickey Simmons serve up some tasty treats at the Thanksgiving lunch.

thanks to them, along with **Boston Bowl Family Fun Center** in Dorchester, and **POSH on Tremont** for all their generous holiday donations. It is wonderful to receive such strong support from across the community.

Finally, we would like to thank you, our supporters, for your positive response to our annual holiday fundraising appeal. So far we have raised over \$60,000 and the donations are still coming in. As we journey into 2008, we look forward to the continued progress of our clients and the agency as a result of this generosity. Happy New Year!



Case worker Kristie Loftus hands out holiday gifts to GateHouse residents Felix Romero and Iris Nieves.

Project Place in the News!

As we continue settling into our new building, the facility is still garnering the attention of various media outlets. We are proud to share these honorable recognitions.

Boston Magazine (January 2008)

Project Place is mentioned in an article about the South End. The piece talks about the opening of **Myers & Chang**, owned and operated by our good friends Joanne Chang and Christopher Meyers, and is located on our ground floor.

WCVB-TV: Homeless Organization Goes Green (January 2, 2008)

In a story recognizing our organization, David Brown of Channel 5 reported on Project Place's continued commitment to the homeless population, and our efforts on being kind to the environment by building a green facility.

Boston Courant (December 2007)

Our Executive Director, Suzanne Kenney, was named one of *Boston Courant's* 2007 People of the Year. The article notes Project Place's contribution to our community and focuses on the hard work that Suzanne has put forth in steering and growing the organization. Congratulations, Suzanne and thank you *Boston Courant* for the great honor.

South End News: Peter's Park Reopens (November 8, 2007)

In an article about the reopening of Peters Park in the South End, Clean Corners...Bright Hopes' maintenance contract with the park is noted - we are happy to do our part as a good neighbor!

Getting A Chance! By the Clients of CREW

Who would of thought we wanted to learn,
who would have thought this could be our turn?

A lot of times we had fallen short,
a lot of times we had no support.

We sat here for days with a look of a frown,
we sat here wishing we weren't always in brown.

Many days go by and we sit and we'd say,
dear God, how did we turn out this way?

At first it was really hard to crack a smile,
for many of us its hard to heal that inner child.

Being in a place like this will take its toll,
but I know I don't want a place like this seeing me get old.

We all are here for many different reasons.
And we didn't give up because there's something we believe in.

This poem is not about a romance,
this poem is about getting another chance.

At some point we all wanted something different,
something new...

Then came these people to our unit, and said,
"Hi, welcome to CREW!"

The Community Reentry for Women (CREW) Program is a partnership between Project Place, the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department and the South End Community Health Center. This poem was written for a recent life-skills and job-readiness class graduation, as the clients prepared for their release from prison.

Congratulations To Our Clients of the Quarter

We are pleased to announce our latest Client of the Quarter: Gary Brewstein. Gary has been described by the staff as "one of the most polite and personable people around Project Place." Everyone knows him for his great attitude, friendly smile and good cooking. A former HomePlate client, he has used his kitchen skills to transition into a permanent, full-time position in the food service industry. We will miss Gary here at Project Place, but we are so proud of his success!



We would not want to forget our previous Client of the Quarter: Linda Taylor. Linda is a graduate of both Project 90 and Betty's Place, and is currently studying to become a Certified Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counselor. Linda has recently moved to her own apartment but is still a regular face around Project Place. We wish Linda luck as she works towards her noble career goals!

Check out the Boston Community Change program at www.cityofboston.gov/mainstreets. Select Project Place as your charity and you can support us and local businesses while you shop!

And Other Project Place Happenings...

Our most recent Project 90 class graduated on December 14, 2007 and all the graduates are working closely with our staff to secure permanent employment. At the graduation it was announced that Sean Pierce, our Education Specialist, will be taking over instruction of the next Project 90 class from Rickey Simmons, Director of Program Services. Rickey will continue to be involved with the customer service aspect of the program. The next session of Project 90 starts in January.

Our deepest gratitude goes to our most recent corporate and philanthropic donors who provide such critical support for our programs: **The Yawkey Foundation, The Phyllis W. McGillicuddy Charitable Trust, Wellesley Congregational Church, The Henry and Joan Wheeler Charitable Fund, TJX, The Paul and Phyllis Fireman Charitable Foundation, Bank of New York Mellon Charitable Giving Program/Arthur Blanchard Trust, and Project Bread.** And a great big thank you to the **Vincent Mulford Foundation** and **The Highland Foundation** for their gifts to our capital campaign.

MindSpring is a new mandatory educational program for all Project Place participants who do not have a high school or General Equivalency Diploma (G.E.D.). The weekly classes will focus on reading, writing, mathematics, oral communication, and critical thinking. MindSpring was developed with the goal of providing our clients with basic educational tools and self confidence they need to enroll in and successfully complete a G.E.D. program.



The Project Place staff gathered to wish Elizabeth Mullaly (seated, 2nd from right) a fond farewell.

Congratulations to Caitlin O'Brien. After four years of hard work as our Director of Client Services, she was recently promoted to the position of Associate Director, a well deserved acknowledgement of her leadership ability.

Clean Corners...Bright Hopes partnered with the city of Boston to assist with their revitalization efforts for the Downtown Crossing area this holiday season. 'Tis the season to be "clean."

The Project Place staff would like to formally say goodbye to the following board members, who have chosen to step down after years of devoted service: Rutledge Simmons, Jill Veilleux, Ed Sobol, and Joanne Chang. Thank you for all your years of dedication and support. We hope to see all of our retired board members at various Project Place happenings.

We are also sad to say goodbye to Elizabeth Mullaly, who has been a member of Project Place's development office for eight years. We gathered over milk and cookies one afternoon to thank Elizabeth for her many contributions to Project Place. Her constant smile and kind ways will be greatly missed, but we know she will always be part of the Project Place family.

Stay tuned for a new line of greeting cards from Project Place. Original artwork and inspirational quotes written by our Project 90 students are a touching way to send messages of love and support.



HomePlate provides private and corporate catering services for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

HomePlate has recently catered events for: Ellis Memorial, Pine Street Inn, Mass Bible Society, a private holiday celebration and the Natalie Merchant Homeless Benefit Concert.

*For catering requests and questions contact:
Brandon Headrick, Food & Beverage Manager
617.542.3740 x36, bheadrick@oprojectplace.org*



PROJECT PLACE

opening doors to opportunity

1145 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02118
617.542.3740
www.projectplace.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 52544
BOSTON, MA

Address Service Requested

Tickets now on sale...

PROJECT PLACE'S

fifth annual

Valentine Gospel Brunch

Sunday, February 3rd 11am - 2pm

Fairmont Copley Plaza

gospelbrunch@projectplace.org

~ Honored guest Mayor Menino
~ MC David Brown of WCBV-TV
~ Address by a Project Place graduate
~ Delicious brunch and cash bar

~ Performances by 3 gospel choirs
~ Live and silent auctions of exotic
vacations, local creative arts, dining,
culture, and much more!