

HALEY HOUSE

Annual Newsletter 2024





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DEAR FRIENDS,

As I reflect on this past year at Haley House, I am reminded of how each of us is like a puzzle piece, coming together to create a bigger, more meaningful picture. Every person — whether a guest, program participant, volunteer, donor, or staff member — adds a unique contribution, and together, we build a community where everyone has a place.

We are living in challenging and divisive times. Yet, thanks to our collective efforts, we have continued to make incredible progress throughout the year. Our newly re-designed LiFT program has provided crucial support for individuals transitioning from incarceration, helping them rebuild their lives. We are especially excited to have hired our first-ever case manager, who is offering invaluable guidance and assistance to both LiFT participants and residents in our Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing. This added support is a huge step forward in providing more holistic care for those in our community.

Our Take Back the Kitchen program continues to empower community members with the knowledge and skills to create healthy meals, fostering confidence and connection. Our soup kitchen and food pantry have been lifelines for so many, providing essential nourishment and an environment of hope. Our affordable housing programs continue to offer safe, stable homes, while our urban farm and garden have provided unique educational experiences and supplied fresh, locally grown food for our community.

Each of these programs is like a piece of a larger puzzle, and only together do they begin to form the complete picture of what we can accomplish. Your support is what makes it all possible, helping to connect each piece and turning our shared vision into reality.

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey as we strive to build a stronger, more just community.

With gratitude,

Reginald Jean
Executive Director



14 returning
citizens graduated

from our redesigned LiFT
program in July



864
volunteers gave
**8,382 hours of
service.**

Nearly twice as many
hours as last year



3,529 lbs
of produce

from our Thornton Street Farm
provided to local seniors and
community groups

20+
residents

of our SRO buildings and LiFT
program participants received
casework support



**YEAR IN
REVIEW**



35,000+

**meals served in our
Soup Kitchen**



7,500+

bags of groceries
distributed through
our food pantry



60+

**garden-based
experiences**

for students at the Melvin
H. King School through our
Urban Gardening program



Facilitated
167

Take Back the Kitchen classes
with a total of 1,328 participants
including 114 justice-involved
youth participants

Staff Profile:

ALEX BEZEK

In April, Alex Bezek joined Haley House as Operations Director, bringing over a decade of senior management experience from organizations like the Providence After School Alliance, the YMCA of Greater Boston, and the YMCA of Greater New York.

In his new role, Alex oversees the team that runs all of Haley House's programs. In his first few months, Alex has already positively impacted Haley House's work by streamlining systems to help programs run more effectively, enabling the team to focus even more of its time and energy on delivering our vital services and one-of-a-kind programming.

Alex describes Haley House as being "like a big family with many extensions" and appreciates the deep connections that people have with the organization. "There are so many individuals with ties to the Haley House Community. You come across individuals who were part of the Live-In Community, or have volunteered once a month for years, or you tell people that you work at Haley House and they start talking about the chocolate chip cookies at the Bakery Cafe."

Alex says that one of things that sets Haley House apart is the dedication of the staff and volunteers, and the impact that has on guests and program participants; "From housing, to access to food, to youth development programs, to coming home after incarceration... whatever program you participate in, your going to have a sense of community and people who care about you as a person."



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**Like a big
family
with many
extensions**

Alex Bezek

*Haley House
Operations Director*

TAKE BACK THE KITCHEN:

Empowering Communities through Cooking

Take Back the Kitchen (TBK) is a series of engaging cooking classes designed for youth, families, and seniors. Through these classes, participants gain essential cooking skills and learn about nutrition while being encouraged to try new foods and embrace mindful eating habits.

So far this year, TBK has led 167 classes, reaching a remarkable 1,328 participants — almost double last year's attendance! Among these participants were 114 justice-involved youth, who took part in a specially tailored TBK curriculum.

Justice-involved youth often face unique health and social challenges, including limited access to preventive healthcare, unmet emotional health needs, and untreated substance use issues. Additionally, up to 90% of these young people have experienced trauma, and 70% are estimated to have mental health disorders.

To address these needs, Haley House developed a specialized TBK curriculum for justice-involved youth. Alongside core cooking skills, this curriculum emphasizes adaptability, self-awareness, and communication skills empowering participants with tools to build resilience and foster personal growth.



167 Classes
1,328 participants
This Year

LiFT

Life Foundations Training

Haley House's LiFT program

has long provided returning citizens a space to build relationships with peers and community allies and to access resources that support their re-entry. This year, the LiFT program was re-designed to include a cohort model, in which a group of returning citizens attends bi-weekly sessions for 12 weeks with a focus on making tangible progress towards building a stable life post incarceration. Participants receive one-to-one support from Haley House's case-worker, and help with securing housing, employment, educational opportunities, and more. Everyone who completes the program receives a stipend to help with the many costs associated with making a successful transition post incarceration.

On July 31st, we held a graduation to celebrate the 14 returning citizens who comprised the first cohort of the newly-redesigned LiFT program. Each graduate spoke about their experiences, the impact of the LiFT program, and their plans for the future. Joseph Charles, a successful businessman, sought-after public speaker, and Haley House Board Member - who was also formerly incarcerated - gave the keynote speech. The event was powerful and spoke to the incredible resourcefulness, strength, and potential that returning citizens bring to our community.

Jody's Story

A year ago, Jody Boykins had just returned home after three years of incarceration. He found himself starting to fall back into the same patterns that had led to trouble in the past, and he knew he wanted something different. A friend, former LiFT and Take Back the Kitchen program manager David Delvalle, told him about Haley House's programs and encouraged him to apply to join the Live In Community. "It was just a shot in the dark," Jody said. Then he came in and volunteered for a shift in the Soup Kitchen. "It was just 'wow.' Seeing people's smiles, seeing people sharing love while they're going through some of the worst times in their lives - it spoke to me."

Jody joined the Live-In Community and moved in to 23 Dartmouth St in January, becoming part of the team that runs the Soup Kitchen, Food Pantry, and Clothing Room. He also signed up to be part of the first cohort for Haley House's newly-redesigned Life Foundations Training program (LiFT).

"LiFT gave me my voice back," Jody explained. "At a lot of these (other) programs, you're just getting spoken to. At LiFT, they started with 'What's going on with you?'"

Another aspect of LiFT that sets it apart, according to Jody, is that the program is led by people who have also experienced incarceration. "Having someone facilitating the group who overcame everything we're talking about and turned it into a success story for the ages is powerful. It shows that it can be done."

Jody has recently completed his associates degree and is on track to earn his bachelor's degree in 2027. After that, he plans to pursue a Master's in Social Work degree and possibly a PhD in sociology. His career goal is to focus on both policy and providing direct service, to be, as Jody puts it, "working long-term to fix the system, while helping people to navigate the broken system we have in the meantime."

"Less than 18 months ago, none of these plans would have been realistic," Jody reflected. "But thanks to places like Haley House, LiFT, TUPIT (the Tufts University Prison Initiative) all coming together, it gives you that hope."

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LiFT
gave me
my voice
back...**

Jody Boykins

Jody Boykins at LiFT Graduation
Photo Credit Obinna Oby Ojimba





HALEY HOUSE SOUP KITCHEN & the Live-In Community

This year, Haley House's recently renovated Soup Kitchen has been bustling with activity. Serving a hearty breakfast five days a week and a delicious lunch on Sundays, we're on track to provide more than 35,000 meals by the end of 2024. This accomplishment is made possible through the incredible generosity of our donors, the dedication of our volunteers and staff, and the unwavering leadership and commitment of our Live-In Community (LIC).

For over fifty years, the LIC at Haley House has created a unique environment where compassionate, dedicated individuals come together, living intentionally in community on the top floors of 23 Dartmouth Street. LIC members not only manage the daily operations of the Soup Kitchen, Food Pantry, and Clothing Room but also commit to a way of life that fosters connection—with one another and with every guest who comes through our doors.

At Haley House, hospitality is more than a value; it's the heart of our community. Those who spend time in our Soup Kitchen experience firsthand the warmth and respect that defines, and has always defined, Haley House.

HALEY HOUSE BAKERY CAFÉ



We're thrilled to announce that our beloved chocolate chip cookies will make a grand return when we open the brand-new Haley House Bakery Café next year!

Here's what's happening at 2147 Washington Street: our soon-to-be Bakery Café is under-going an incredible transformation, with construction of the building scheduled to wrap up by February 2025.

Afterward, we'll dive into a four-to-six month buildout, getting ready for our anticipated opening in September. Mark your calendars—next fall is going to be delicious!

In September, our staff and Board had the exciting opportunity to tour the raw space with New Atlantic Development's Brian Goldson. Imagining our new Bakery Café in the heart of Nubian Square was inspiring, especially considering the space will be surrounded by a vibrant mix of retail, arts, and community spaces dedicated to driving economic growth and celebrating culture.

Not only will we be in the same building as a dance studio and a "maker space", we'll also be a key part of the overall revitalization of Nubian Square. Plus, there will be a public courtyard connecting the new Bakery Café to 12 Dade Street, where our former café space will serve as a bustling catering and production kitchen for Haley House.

When we open our doors, the Bakery Café will once again serve as the centerpiece of Haley House's re-entry programming. This means offering a supportive, skill-building environment for returning citizens with culinary experience, giving them a meaningful, welcoming first job in our community post incarceration.

We can't wait to welcome you back to share in the magic of our space, our mission, and of course, our chocolate chip cookies!

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Mel King Garden

The Melvin H. King South End Academy, formerly the McKinley School, is a public inclusion school for students from Kindergarten through 12th grade. Eleven years ago, teachers started the Mel King Garden to create an outdoor learning space. After five years of managing it on their own, they partnered with Haley House, which hired a part-time Garden Coordinator in 2018. Now, with a new multi-year contract from Boston Public Schools, this role has become full-time.

The Garden Coordinator works with teachers and staff to enhance learning through hands-on experiences in gardening, botany, food justice, and cultural heritage. Importantly, the garden supports students' emotional wellness, especially elementary students who have no playground—a stark reflection of the inequalities in access to outdoor spaces for urban youth. For many, the garden is their only space for outdoor recreation, offering a chance to learn, play, and experience nature.

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Students harvested the garden produce for the Haley House's Food Pantry, so they got to see the impact of their work.

Fatima Seck

Urban Garden Coordinator



Thornton Street Farm

In 2012, the Hawthorne Youth and Community Center sought Haley House's support in preserving land in Highland Park as development threatened longtime residents. Thornton Street Farm was born, transforming this space into a community-driven hub. The farm serves as an undeveloped green area for Highland Park, promoting access to fresh, local food, and empowering Roxbury teens to become leaders in their food system.

This vibrant space hosts meditation events, herbalism workshops, school field trips, and free community gatherings, creating a welcoming environment for all ages. Through the Teen Farmers program, local youth gain hands-on experience in crop selection, soil health, and land stewardship while exploring food justice and community history.

The teens play a pivotal role in the Senior Produce Distribution, sharing fresh produce with 50 local seniors each summer. Their involvement builds confidence and strengthens intergenerational bonds, enriching the community far beyond the bountiful harvests they produce.

As a parent of a teen farmer recently described it: "One of the best parts of the program are the connections, and I've seen my daughter see herself as more and more a part of the community. She talks to me enthusiastically about the conversations she has with her neighbors when she drops off vegetables and the people she works with in the garden. I've also seen her grow in confidence and take pride in what she is doing."



HOUSING

Affordable housing remains a significant focus of Haley House's mission. Across Roxbury and the South End, Haley House provides over 100 affordable housing units.

Interfaith Apartments

In 2022, Haley House became the sole owner of four buildings known as the Interfaith Apartments, which include 69 subsidized family units located on Columbus Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue, and West Concord Street. These buildings are now fully managed by Haley House with support from Maloney Properties and Section 8 vouchers through the Boston Housing Authority. This ownership allows Haley House to fulfill its mission by offering safe, affordable housing that is financially sustainable for the organization.

Single-Room Occupancy Residences

Since 1993, Haley House has provided 24 single-room occupancy units on Columbus Avenue for low-income residents, including those who were formerly homeless or are returning citizens. In 2024, Haley House's newly hired case manager began working with people living in our SROs, providing vital support. Upcoming renovations will upgrade both building's shared kitchens, underscoring our commitment to maintaining safe and supportive housing for our communities.

John Leary House

A generous donation from a supporter, the John Leary House offers nine family units in the South End.

Through these programs, Haley House remains dedicated to promoting equitable, affordable housing for the Boston community.



GET INVOLVED!

Our work is only possible with the support of the Haley House community. Thank you for being part of it!



haleyhouse.org/goods

Lend a Hand

Organize an in-kind donations drive for our most-needed items



haleyhouse.org/volunteer

Volunteer

Join us for a shift in our Soup Kitchen, Food Pantry or other programs



haleyhouse.org/donate

Fund Our Impact

Make a one-time or monthly donation at *haleyhouse.org/donate* or by check using the enclosed envelope

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Content designed by Chelsea Akers*



HALEY HOUSE

23 DARTMOUTH STREET

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02116



Save the Date!
Souper Bowl XVII
February 16, 2025
haleyhouse.org/souperbowl

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