

MILESTONE REPORT 2025

One Child, One Friend.
12+ years, no matter what.

FRIENDS of the
CHILDREN

Generational Change,
One Child at a Time
Boston



A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



A year ago, I posed the following question when drafting my yearly letter to our community - **what does hope look like at a time of despair?**

The question was asked during a time when political transitions started creating more hardship in communities already shut out from opportunity. As an organization that has never shied away from taking on hard challenges, we knew our mission would be more important than ever - to be there for all of our Achievers, relentlessly, with love, no matter what.

One year later, we have witnessed social safety nets rapidly being erased, children and families terrorized for seeking better futures for themselves, and access to opportunities becoming more out of reach than ever before. Even in all of the chaos, instead of despair and surrender, Friends-Boston FIGHTS. We fight with hope, perseverance and community. We adapt our resource deliveries and partnerships to make up for growing gaps. We fortify ourselves to be the safe space our children and families need. We create new access to opportunities by inviting more individuals and institutions, old and new, to join us. And we double down as the place our Achievers can dream, take risks, try new things, be inspired to be great, and to rest and recharge when the world becomes too overwhelming.

The stories and accomplishments you will read in this Milestone Report are a snapshot of the thousands of hours our Mentors have poured into lifting up our Achievers. I could not be more proud of the talent, commitment and the love our team shows each day. Because of them, our Achievers crushed goals, learned new skills, found new sparks and charged forward confidently toward a future where they can be anything they dream of. Over the next few years, we will continue to grow to reach more communities and children who need us in their corner while staying true to our commitment of showing up, no matter what. With your continued support, we can continue to be the hope we all need at a time of despair - and in times like these, that is the fuel that powers our team to show up, no matter what.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to be 'Yi-Chin', written over a dark blue background.

Yi-Chin



WHO WE ARE

Founded in Portland, Oregon in 1993, and based on the success of the Portland Program, Friends of the Children-Boston (Friends-Boston) was founded as an independent not for profit 501(c)(3) in 2004 as the first organization established by the GreenLight Fund in Boston.

The premise of our ambitious model is straightforward and transformative: Enter the lives of children facing the toughest challenges early, and provide them with a dedicated, caring adult who stays by their side no matter what. These paid, Professional Mentors are called “Friends,” and the children and youth we serve are called “Achievers” to demonstrate our belief in their potential to achieve great things!

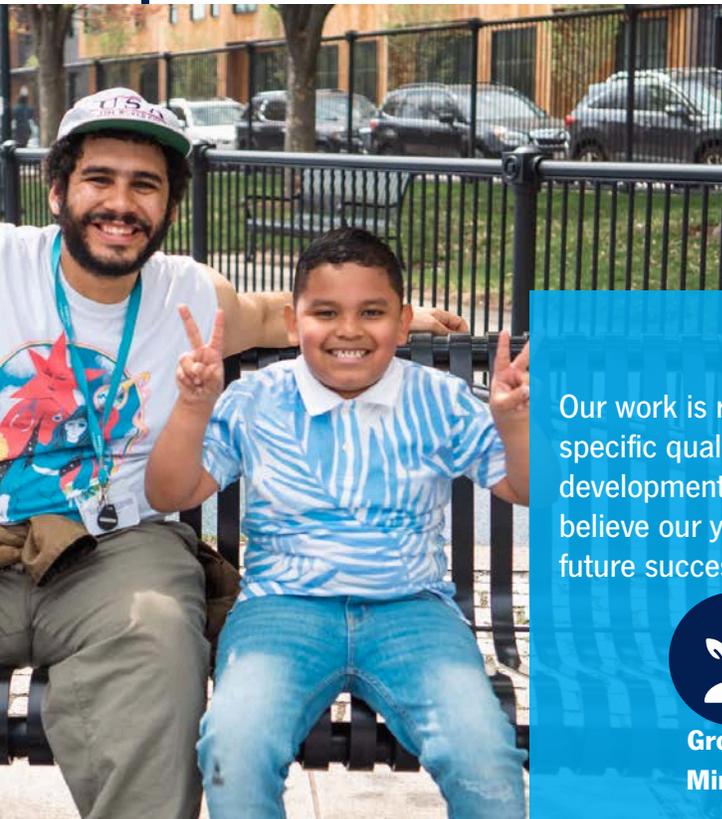
OUR MISSION

Impacting generational change by empowering youth who are facing the greatest obstacles through relationships with Professional Mentors – 12+ years, no matter what.

OUR MODEL

The Friends of the Children model for long-term Professional Mentoring is distinct, courageous, and proven. We select children who will benefit the most – those facing multiple systemic barriers and adverse childhood experiences – and hire and train full-time paid Professional Mentors. The work is relationship-based, individualized, and intentional.

We commit to every child for the long term, from kindergarten through graduation – 12+ years, no matter what.



Our Core Assets

Our work is rooted in nine research-based Core Assets, which are specific qualities we focus on to ensure the social and emotional development of our youth. With our nine Core Assets in place, we believe our youth will enter adulthood with a solid foundation for future success.



Growth
Mindset



Belonging



Hope



Perseverance
& Grit



Self
Determination



Problem
Solving



Positive
Relationship
Building



Self
Management



Find Your
Spark

OUR IMPACT IN 2025

Our time-tested, proven model focuses on the power of one-on-one, paid Professional Mentoring. This provides our Achievers with a trusted Mentor as they grow through each phase of their young lives toward adulthood. We also look beyond the Achiever to their families. We partner with their caregivers to ensure that they have the resources they need to provide stability within their homes.

154

Achievers receiving one on one
**Professional
Mentorship**

OVER

\$85k

distributed in
SUPPORT RESOURCES
to families

452

Caregivers and siblings receiving
**HOLISTIC FAMILY
SUPPORT**

92%

of Friends-Boston alumni
GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL

vs.

63%

of Boston Public Schools
low income students

99%

Friends-Boston alumni are
**EMPLOYED OR
PURSUING SECONDARY
EDUCATION DEGREES**
including Masters Degrees and PH.Ds

ADDRESSED

45

family crisis situations
through
**1:1 IN DEPTH
SUPPORT**

100%

of Caregivers say they would
**RECOMMEND THE FRIENDS-
BOSTON PROGRAM**

86%

of Achievers say they feel
**HOPEFUL ABOUT
THEIR FUTURE**

100%

of Achievers say that
**FRIENDS-BOSTON helps them
LEARN NEW THINGS**



THE WORK IN ACTION

Everyday, our Leadership Team, Professional Mentors, and Supportive Services team navigate complex challenges and systemic barriers in our Achievers lives to ensure they are able to reach their highest potential. Below is the anonymous story of one of our Achievers and how our staff worked diligently to support them.

Elementary School

As a young elementary school student, Kevin* is growing up in a home shaped by his mother's struggle with substance use, an absent father, and exposure to violence. For children, chronic instability and fear don't just create hard memories; they keep the body and brain in survival mode, making it difficult to focus, trust, or fully engage at school. Kevin's withdrawal and isolation are not a lack of potential - they are protective responses to a world that hasn't felt safe. Yet when he is with people he trusts, his humor, kindness, loving nature, and openness to new experiences shine through.

Onboarding Kevin as an Achiever into the Friends-Boston Program

- Professional Mentor starts slow with weekly 1:1 time focusing on **trust-building** and finding things Kevin might be interested in by bringing him on **outings**
- **Constant communication with caregiver** to build trust and ensure he is safe
- Professional Mentor begins **weekly classroom visits** to establish relationships with teachers and staff, more closely engage with Kevin's day to day experiences, and establish champions for him at his school
- Professional Mentor begins the work of **advocating** to make sure stakeholders in Kevin's* life (social workers, teachers, therapists, etc) are in communication and **centering Kevin's needs**
- Professional Mentor and Supportive Services team begins to establish **whole family support** slowly with caregiver (food, housing, mental health, job, etc.)
- Kevin participates in group programming at Friends-Boston office, like social-emotional programming for youth

Adolescence

As a teenager, Kevin appears taller, stronger, and outwardly self-sufficient - but instability at home has deepened as his mother's addiction worsens, pushing him into adulthood without the support every young person deserves. The impact of early adversity still lingers: he wrestles with belonging, remains withdrawn at school, and carries a quiet uncertainty about his own worth that teachers aren't always sure how to address. Yet after six years with a consistent, caring Professional Mentor, Kevin shows up each day determined and self-motivated.

Supporting Kevin in Adolescence

- Professional Mentor and Kevin continue to invest in **confidence building, self advocacy, resourcefulness**, and building intentional space for Kevin to **celebrate small wins**, build on the skills he already possesses, and **do things he enjoys** during their weekly time together
- **Professional** Mentor and Supportive Services team partners with school staff to find Kevin champions and **consistent resources within his school community**
- Professional Mentor and Supportive Services team prioritizes securing **mental health and resource support** for mom and Kevin through Friends-Boston partners and city/state programs
- Kevin participates in **group programming** at the Friends-Boston office, like the Young Leaders in Mental Health program, the young men of color affinity group, STEM and entrepreneurship programming, and more to build resilience, confidence, and community

**name changed*

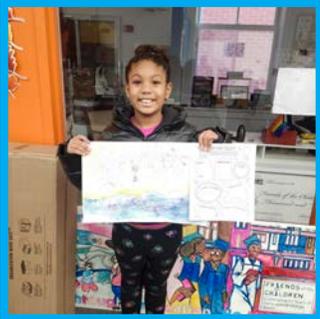
HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2025

In 2025, Friends of the Children-Boston continued to reach for the stars! Halfway through our Strategic Growth Plan, we officially have a total of 154 Achievers onboarded and the most Professional Mentors hired in our chapter's history. While this year was especially hard on our families, the hopes and dreams of our community thrived within the walls of our offices with creative programming, resilience and community building, love, and lots and lots of snacks!

Building our S.T.E.A.M. skills!



Visiting colleges and Universities!



Making

New Years resolutions!
Pictured: "Be kinder to myself"



Exploring new parts of our city!



Learning

skills that help us
build independence
and support nutrition!



Taking care of our bodies through water sports!





Cheering
on our favorite teams!

Meeting
new friends!

From people to pets
to our State Street
Day of Joy!



Enjoying
delicious snacks!



Improving
our karate skills!



Reaching
new milestones!

Loving

ourselves, each other,
and our communities
everyday!



THE POWER OF SHOWING UP

Kamara has been in the Friends of the Children-Boston family since 2014 - that's 12 years of Friends! This year, she graduates high school and has already been accepted to two universities! Her Professional Mentors over the last 12 years reflect on her time below.



I met Kamara when I was an intern and she was in first grade. As chaotic as 1st graders can be, Kamara was equally sweet, creative, thoughtful and caring. Then I got the opportunity to Mentor her when she got to 7th grade. She was not your typical 7th grader, she was wise beyond her years, insightful and paid attention to things not said. I've been fortunate enough to watch her grow and become the young woman she wants to be. We worked together to find her voice - to say the hard things and the things that can be really scary. Through the years, she has continued to be wise, thoughtful, silly, creative and authentically her. She is 1 of 1, a joy to watch become the person I knew she could be and more. I'm excited to see all that she will get to do and accomplish.

*Shané Lewis
Assistant Director of Program - Adolescent*



I met Kamara in November 2024, and have supported her largely in preparing her college materials and finally submitting applications last month!

Kamara's exuberant energy makes her presence known in the office, and you can usually find her passionately telling a story to any member of staff who happens to be nearby. Kamara has already been accepted to Morgan State University and is getting ready for her next steps after graduation. I am so proud of her!

*Kadijah Mootry
Youth Advocate (Friend)*



When I first met Kamara, she was a shy second grader who loved to draw, paint, and play at the park. She appreciated one on

one time with her Mentor and would come prepared each outing to unleash her creativity in the STEAM room with whatever project she had in mind for the day. I've loved watching her art skills and creations evolve over the last 10 years, as well as the way she's been able to grow within the Friends community. It's hard to believe the once shy, introverted second grader is now actively participating in ALC, leading mental health groups for younger Achievers, using her entrepreneurship skills by selling her creations at Black Owned Boston, and has officially been accepted to college. I couldn't be prouder of the person Kamara has grown to be and I can't wait to see what her next chapter will bring.

*Mary Kate Sullivan
Assistant Director of Program - Elementary*



Cartoon by Kamara

LIGHTNING ROUND!

Get to know our Achievers through a rapid fire Q+A!



Would you rather be invisible or have super speed?

Be invisible obviously super speed
super speed so I can get to people that need me quickly
invisible so predators don't get me. INSTANT sleep



If you were a cartoon character, who would you be?

myself spiderman
stitch because he is strong and cute. MiniONS
sponge bob so i can cook



What is your favorite class in school?

I LIKE english Becos I hqth want to read english.
Ah + gym science



What do you do when you need to take a break?

To NOT FEEL ANGRY, I PLAY with the fidgets lay down
karate breaths I LEAVE THE CLASSROOM
A be p d reath I think about my next move



What is something you're proud of that you did in 2025?

I improved my math I MET NEW PEOPLE
I left people that weren't good for me
trying hard things first before I ask for help
IM proud of playing Roblox.

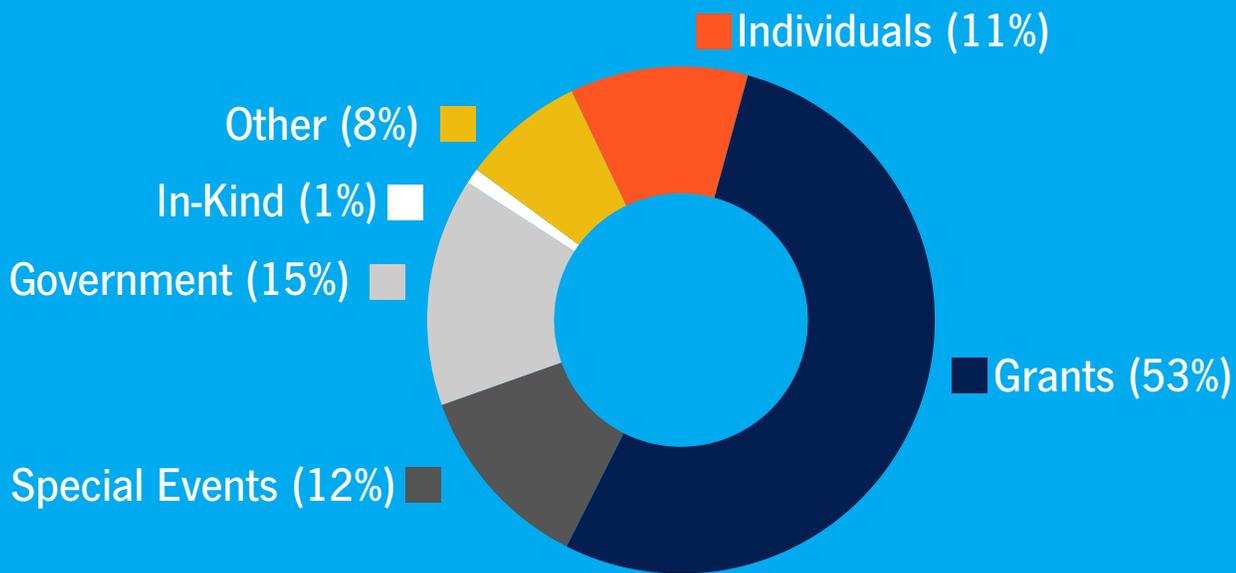
AUDITED FINANCIALS

Friends-Boston is ecstatic to have so many partners and supporters who have chosen to invest in our mission. From individual donors to businesses, foundations, government, and more - we truly exemplify the phrase "it takes a village". The generosity of our village makes our work breaking generational cycles of trauma possible with impacts lasting 12 years and well beyond.

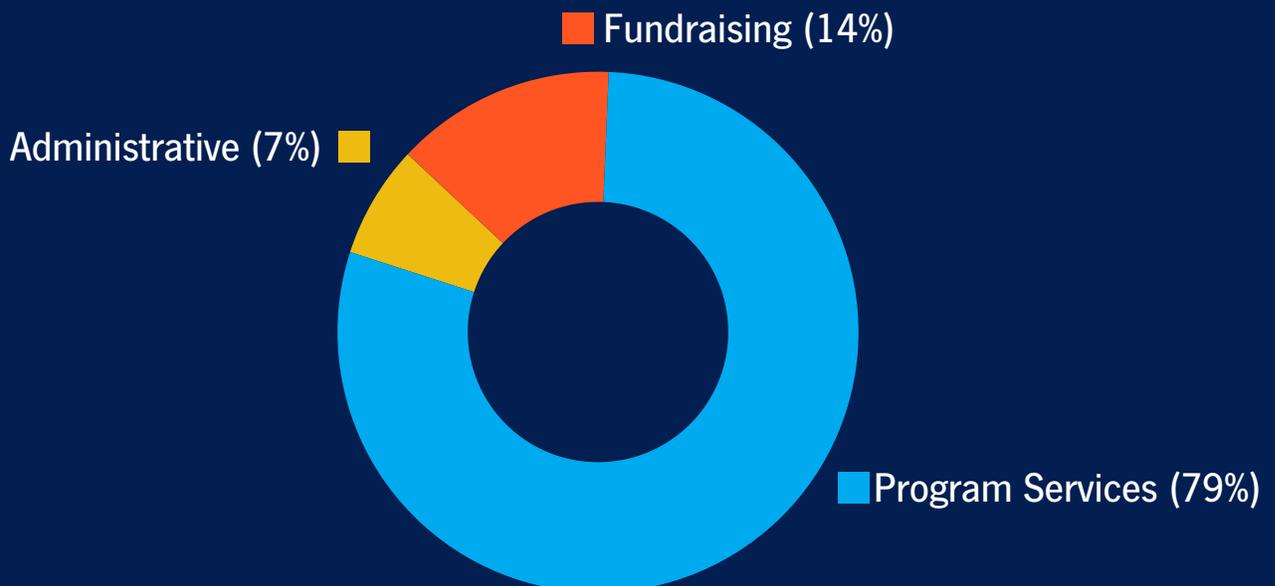
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED OPERATING REVENUE: \$4,259,250

\$4,068,532*

**less event expenses*



TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES: \$3,542,474



OUR TEAM

Management Team

Yi-Chin Chen, MSW
Executive Director

Daniel DeLeon
Chief of Staff

Stacy DellOrfano, MPA
Director of Development

Marie Smith, MSW
Senior Director of Programs

Jesse Doran
Director of Program and Evaluation

Shané Lewis
Assistant Director of Program - Adolescent

Mary Kate Sullivan
Assistant Director of Program - Elementary

Paula Alejandra Lozano Roa
East Boston Program Manager

Program Team - Elementary Cohort

Arlene Amaya Sleeper
Youth Advocate (Friend) - East Boston

Arline Olivero
Youth Advocate (Friend) - East Boston

Jesus Orozco
Youth Advocate (Friend) - East Boston

Kenny Revoredo
Youth Advocate (Friend) - East Boston

Jay Thomas Clements
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Issac Fung
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Lizeth Hidalgo
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Mike Jones
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Michelle Malacara
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Jocelyn Pedrotti
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Tahjay Thompson
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Program Team - Adolescent Cohort

Elizabeth Bianchi
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Frank Coleman
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Kadijah Mootry
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Mikael Negron
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Maricela Sanchez-Garcia
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Stefan Forrestal-Swaintek
Youth Advocate (Friend)

Caregiver Support Services Team

Francheska Cano
2Gen Caregiver Support Specialist

Administrative Team

Cory Berry-Whitlock
Grants and Institutional Relations Manager

Daniella Dias
Individual Giving Manager

Adrielle Lecane
Corporate Partnerships and Events Manager

Estephania Mejia
Operations Manager

Miskyat Oladosu
Development Operations and Donor
Engagement Specialist

Board of Directors

Ginnette Acevedo
Patient Support Specialist,
Vertex Pharmaceuticals,
Parent of Alumni

Nicole Borden
Development Consultant

Michael Cleary
Retired Banking Oversight
and Management Executive

Ruby Chiu
Global Head of Client
Management
Charles River Development
(CRD), a State Street
Company

Jim Davey
Marketing & Brand Executive

Deborah Drew
Director of Philanthropic
Development, National Grid
Foundation

Robert E. Hallagan
Co Chair
Vice Chairman & Managing
Director, Board Leadership
Services, Korn Ferry

Junlin Ho
General Counsel & Corporate
Secretary, Scholar Rock

Dr. Marvin Loiseau
Dean of Academics,
Benjamin Franklin Institute of
Technology

Julie Lynch
Co-Chair
Independent Consultant

Prapti Mittal
Investments and M&A,
Amazon

Uchenna Ndulue
Bureau Director,
Boston Public Health
Commission

Allen C. Nunnally
Senior Managing
Director, Chestnut
Partners

Charlie Platt
Partner, Hemenway &
Barnes

Yanina Reid
Head of Tax, Citizens
Bank

John Simon
Friends of the
Children-Boston Co-
Founder
Managing Director,
Sigma Prime Ventures

Jeff Somers
Treasurer
Partner, KPMG LLP

Danielle Williams
Managing Director,
Wellington
Management

Jendayi Williams
Program Alumni
Graduate Student,
Mental Health
Counseling

Young Professionals Board

Maurice Gilbert
Co-Chair
Development Officer, Feeding
Tampa Bay

Dr. Alexandra Penta
Co-Chair
Pediatric Dentist, Lahair & Gallagher
Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics

Kristen Tilley
Vice Co-Chair
Investment Analyst, Boston
Children's Hospital

Anshul Krishnan
Vice Co-Chair
Head of Business Development,
Akston

Dylan Berens
Chair, Fundraising
Senior Clinical Research Associate,
Massachusetts General Hospital

Jessica Jangam
Chair, External Activities
Private Equity Associate, Fisher
Lynch Capital

Samantha Kummerer
Chair, Operations
Investigative Reporter,
7News Boston

Mary Hopper
Chair, Finance
Investment Banking
Associate, Citizens Bank

Keshav Mallidi
Chair, Membership
Private Equity Associate,
Bain Capital

Tom Auslander
Associate, Life Sciences,
Blackstone Inc

Michael Kokkines
Growth Equity Associate,
TA Associates

Tarig Meyers
Chief of Staff to District 7 City
Councilor Rev. Miniard
Culpepper, City of Boston

Jasmine Welcome
Owner and Director,
Roots Unraveled, LLC

Kiley Baltazar, RN MBA
Global Strategy Consultant,
Siemens Healthineers

Daniel Jacob
Manufacturing Operations
Consultant, Saint-Gobain
Certain Teed

Michael Soraci
Owner, Live Fit New England
LLC



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