

FR1ENDS of the
CH1LDREN
Boston

Strengthening Families

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2022 MILESTONE REPORT



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2022 marked my seventh year as the Executive Director of Friends of the Children-Boston (Friends-Boston). It seems like it was just yesterday when I was introduced to this incredible organization. It's been an amazing journey!

Emerging from the last few years where we witnessed the convergence of the global pandemic, racial reckoning, and economic uncertainties, we made 2022 the year of hopes and dreams. We chose the theme because, too often, our world focuses on the limitations and deficits of those on the margins of the society. We forget that those who are overshadowed by darkness often have the strongest determination, the brightest hopes, and the biggest dreams.

We have learned that when you can be a consistent champion and make a commitment of 12 and a half years, amazing things happen. The child that worried about going on group field trips grew up to be a banker and a homeowner. The boy who was threatened with multiple school expulsions grew up to be strong builder with the best smile. The girl that dreamed of being a neuroscientist fulfilled her lifelong dream of attending an Ivy League college and is now a junior at Columbia. The kid who dreamed of having his own bedroom became a star Division 1 basketball player and made his father proud by graduating from University of Oregon. Story after story of our graduates – many of them with us this evening – proves that their lives, and all of our lives, are infinitely better when we ask them about their hopes and dreams instead of asking them about their struggles.

We have also learned that there are more young people who could use a professional mentor by their side. In fact, for every child we select to be in our program, there are eight deserving children who we aren't able to serve. Since the pandemic, we also know that supporting the child alone isn't enough – we must be there to amplify the hopes and dreams of the whole family. With more than half of Boston youth reporting struggles with their mental health, the next generation's hopes and dreams are fractured.

With the launch of our five-year Strategic Plan, we will do our part to move the needle on all of these things. Over the next five years, we will double the number of young people served per year from 140 to 300. We will expand our family support initiative to fully adopt a 2Gen Model so we can also invest in the hopes and dreams of the caregivers, benefiting the entire household. We will respond to ever-evolving and increased needs of our region and form partnerships to bring Friends-Boston to more communities starting with our newest partnership in East Boston!

As you read through our stories of 2022, I invite you to join us by continuing to support us and investing in our bold vision. We look forward to partnering with you to make all of our Achievers' hopes and dreams come true!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yi-Chin Chen', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Yi-Chin Chen
Executive Director

WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION AND MODEL

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 GENERATIONAL CHANGE MODEL

- ONE** **We seek out those who need us most.**
Youth who have experienced and been exposed to significant adversity and trauma.
- TWO** **We stay for the long term.**
Children have a salaried Mentor (Friend) for 12+ years - kindergarten through graduation.
- THREE** **Our model is relationship-based.**
Our Friends build one-on-one relationships with our youth, and become part of their family.
- FOUR** **We are trauma informed.**
We provide potential paths for healing by recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma.
- FIVE** **We intervene as early as age 5.**
The earlier you intervene with a traumatized child, the more likely they are to overcome.
- SIX** **We empower youth to build Core Assets.**
These are nine research-based qualities for the social and emotional development of our youth.

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



Problem Solving



Perseverance & Grit



Self Management



Self Determination



Find Your Spark



Positive Relationship Building



OUR IMPACT

GENERATIONAL CHANGE

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.

INVESTMENT

14,000+

total hours of service

5,500+

caregiver contacts

5,125

unique outings

2,536

school contacts

44,000+

miles traveled to
connect and engage with
our Achievers

IMPACT

94%

of Achievers were able to
accomplish goal(s) they
are proud of

92%

successfully advanced to
the next grade level

91%

of Achievers used
preventative physical and
mental health resources

91%

avoided juvenile
justice system



138

Achievers
served



12

Full-Time
Professional
Mentors
(Friends)



365

Caregivers
and siblings

**One Child. One Friend. 12+ years.
No matter what.**



"You're always going to get the help you need. If one person can't help, there's always someone who can. It's like an extended family."

- Zaid, Achiever

REACHING FAMILIES

TRANSITION TO 2GEN

In recent years, we have seen more than ever how the support we provide to our Achievers has been invaluable in helping them to maintain a sense of normalcy and calm. However, the struggles that their families were experiencing at home — including loss of employment, inadequate support in remote learning transition, and significant threats to physical and mental health — threatened to undermine our hard work and the success of our Achievers.

We began to rethink our model, determining how to not only support our Achievers but how we could also support their families. That was the beginning of our transition to the 2Gen approach.

2Gen focuses on providing support to the whole family to ensure that caregivers and siblings have the help they need. To begin transitioning our program to this new model, we added enhanced family support elements and structured programming for both Achievers and caregivers.

We are rolling out our new 2Gen model in a way that will enable Friends-Boston to make a more significant impact in the lives of Achievers and their families. Our \$18 million, five-year Strategic Growth Plan campaign will allow us to expand to serve from 144 to over 300 Achievers, and from 300 to up to 800 families.



New 2Gen Caregiver Support Specialist Joins Our Team

In June 2022 Francheska "Franny" Cano joined the Friends-Boston team as our new 2Gen Caregiver Support Specialist. Franny brings a wealth of experience to this new role, and will be a great ally for our caregivers who's only a call away.

When asked about what drew her to the role and Friends-Boston, Franny said: "I knew I wanted to be the 2Gen specialist because as a young single mother, I know how hard it can be to find resources and community. Not knowing what to do or where to ask for help is a space I've been in before. It is scary and uncomfortable, and children feel that. Friends-Boston is answering a really important need that impacts so many families. I want to be a part of that support. I want caregivers to feel seen advocated for and supported. I'm here to be a part of breaking generational curses for families. Assisting caregivers will help us get there and invest in our children even more. I'm here to help those caregivers set the bar for their families and generations to come."



2GEN IN ACTION

PARTNERING WITH CAREGIVERS

Caregivers play a critical role as partners in the work being done by Friends-Boston. Our program is not meant to be a replacement for the family groups of our Achievers. Instead, we collaboratively work with caregivers through our 2Gen approach to provide support and resources that empower families as a whole. This also allows for the lessons and skills Achievers gain as part of the Friends-Boston program to be reinforced when at home.

While that element of reinforcement is critical for Achiever success, we are also focused on providing support to caregivers that goes beyond that scope and takes a number of different forms:



- We include all siblings within our Achiever families into our annual winter coat and Frosty's Friends holiday gift drives.
- Friends work with caregivers to advocate for Achievers within schools and other community activities.
- Achiever families are invited to participate in events throughout the year that build community and support.
- Caregivers are invited to participate in support group activities that allow them to share ideas and strategies with others, while they also gain access to resources to reach their own goals.

When caregivers are supported, their families are better equipped to stand up against and overcome the difficulties that are present within their communities. Generational change begins by supporting families as a whole, and Friends-Boston's 2Gen approach is supplying Achiever families with the tools they need to find success.

FRIEND RAISER HIGHLIGHTS CAREGIVER'S STORY



Each caregiver has a story to tell about Friends-Boston's impact on their family. During the 2022 Friend Raiser, Jessica spoke about that impact, especially the connection between her daughter, Melissa*, and her Friend, Shané.

"Shané is like family to us," said Jessica. "Being able to have a mentor and someone you can trust with your children outside of home is an amazing thing, to know that somebody loves your child just as much as you love them."

Even during the pandemic, Shané never waived from supporting Melissa's mother by doing everything from calling to check in to picking up supplies that the family needed. "It really takes a village...I really appreciate Shané for just dedicating her time and being a great person in Melissa's life."

**Name changed*

ALUMNI SUPPORT

KEEPING OUR PROMISE

Since our founding in 2004, Friends-Boston has worked with 223 Achievers. During their time with us, they receive the support, encouragement, and resources needed as they grew into adults. Once their time with us comes to an end, the story is not over.

Our professional mentors are called Friends because they build lasting and impactful connections with the Achievers they work with. As they did when Achievers were making the transition from elementary to adolescent, they help program alumni navigate the early days of adulthood by providing advice, access to opportunities, and a continued connection to the Friends-Boston support system, including current and former board members and partner organizations within the wider community. That support can be invaluable as alumni work toward achieving milestones that include landing their first job or securing their first apartment.

These are big moments, and we celebrate each one with them.



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**Achievers have
graduated from the
Friends-Boston
program**

Meet Abbi: An Achiever Success Story

Abbi joined Friends-Boston as an Achiever when she was in first grade after moving to the United States with her mother and siblings from Guyana in South America. Her Friend became a part of the family in two distinct ways - they provided support for Abbi by bringing her out of her shell and helping her to find her voice, and they also supported Abbi's mother who was a single parent and going to school.

Her Friend worked with Abbi during her middle school years to help her with her social anxiety helped build her confidence to apply to an exam school. Her Friend was there when it was time for high school, helping Abbi prepare for and driving her to her Boston Latin Academy (BLA) exam.

Putting the "+" in 12+, after graduating from BLA, her Friend helped her move into and decorate her college dorm room, reassuring her that "she got this!" While in college, Abbi was looking for an internship and reached out to her Friend to ask for assistance. This is where the Friends-Boston family stepped up.

A Friends-Boston Board member – Michael Cleary – saw something special in Abbi and was able to place her into an internship with Santander Bank. Once extremely shy, Abbi knew she wanted to work with people, making her placement in the HR department a perfect fit. She was hired for part-time work in 2017 while attending college and was hired full-time after graduation.

Today, Abbi works full-time at Santander Bank in HR, is a first-generation homeowner, is married with a new baby, and is working on her MBA.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Historic Gift from MacKenzie Scott

As Friends-Boston worked to implement the new 2Gen approach in support of our \$18 million Five-Year Strategic Plan, it was announced in August 2022 that the organization had received the single largest gift in its history - \$2.4 million - from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. The gift was part of a larger \$44 million donation that provided funding to Friends of the Children network partners across the U.S.

MacKenzie's gift will not only support Friends-Boston in doubling the number of youth served and expanding the service footprint regionally through the new 2Gen model, but it will also expand the offerings in mental health and special education support services that are provided to Achievers and their families.



End of Year Celebration

Though our Achievers love learning in school, they are always excited to begin summer vacation. Our End of Year Celebration marks the transition to summer with an opportunity for our Achievers and their families to come together for fun and food. We had over 100 people attend this year's event.



Frosty's Friends

This gift giving program provides over 400 gifts to our Achievers and their siblings through the generosity of individual and corporate donors. It also follows our 2Gen approach, which focuses on supporting not only the Achiever but their entire family.



Friend Raiser

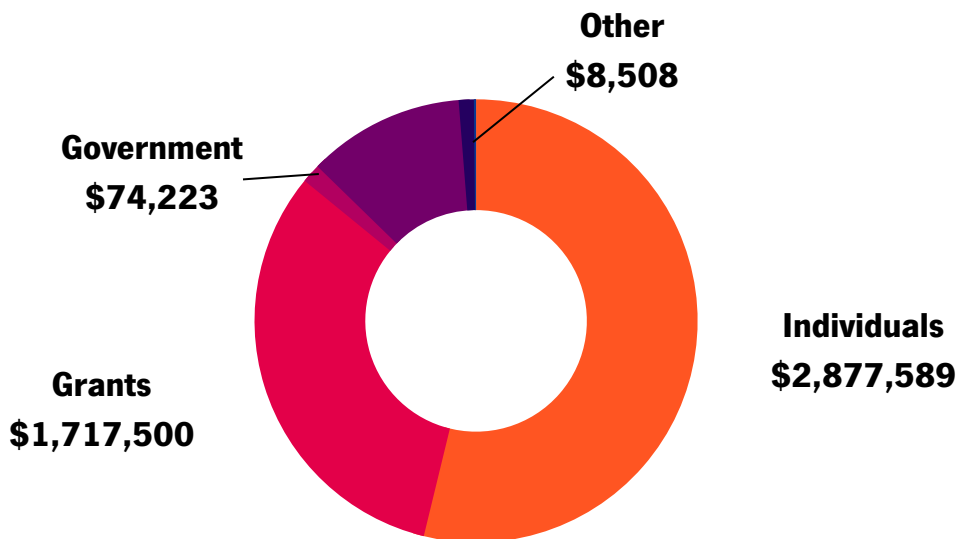
We made the decision to return to holding an in-person Friend Raiser event at the Mandarin Oriental in Boston after a two-year absence, and the Friends-Boston community responded with resounding support. The event - our largest fundraiser of the year - raised \$605,110.



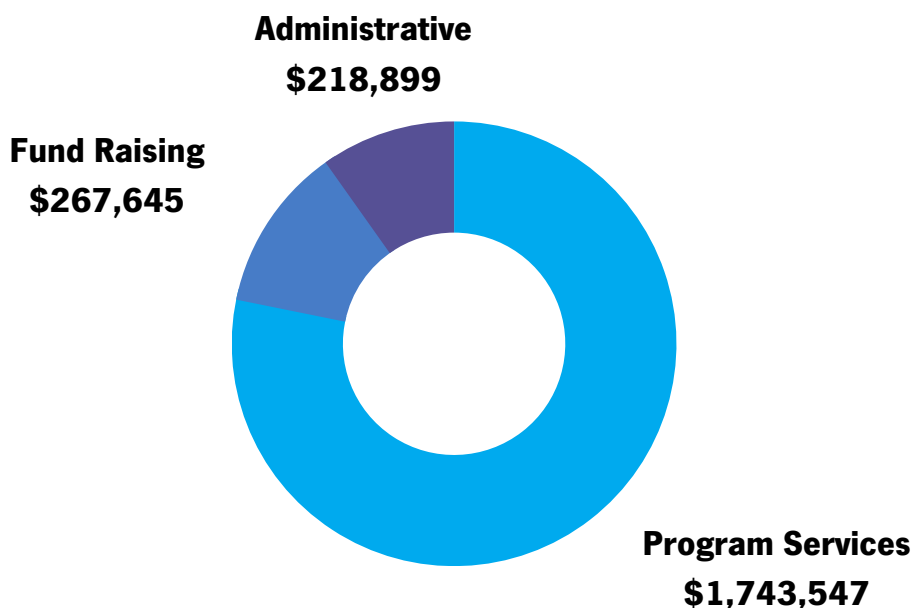
FY 2022 AUDITED FINANCIALS

With an operating budget just under \$2.3 Million, we're grateful to have dedicated supporters who partner with us in our mission. They range from individuals to businesses, foundations to government - 544 of them in FY22, and the number continues to grow. Their generosity makes our work possible, and the impacts can be seen in the lives of our Achievers. Additionally, the historic, out of the blue \$2.4M gift from MacKenzie Scott has accelerated our five-year \$18M growth plan that will see us be a \$5M organization by 2025.

TOTAL UNRESTRICTED REVENUE: \$5,349,254



OPERATING EXPENSES: \$2,230,091



Please see our website for a list of our generous supporters.

OUR TEAM

Staff

Management Team

Yi-Chin Chen
Executive Director

Stacy DellOrfano, MPA
Director of Development

Jesse Doran
Director of Program and Evaluation

Aileen Duggan-Arzeno
Chief of Staff

Shané Lewis
Assistant Director of Program - Adolescent

Paula Alejandra Lozano Roa
East Boston Program Manager

Marie Smith, MSW
Senior Director of Programs

Mary Kate Sullivan
Assistant Director of Program - Elementary

Program Team

Saredo Ali
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Adolescent Cohort

Joelleen Alphonse
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Elementary Cohort

Carina Azuine
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Elementary Cohort

Francheska Cano
2Gen Caregiver Support Specialist

Jay Thomas Clements
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Elementary Cohort

Frank Coleman
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Adolescent Cohort

Rue George
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Adolescent Cohort

Addy Marcus
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Elementary Cohort

Mikael Negron
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Adolescent Cohort

Richard Prophete
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Elementary Cohort

Stefan Forrestal-Swaintek
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Adolescent Cohort

April Tang
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Elementary Cohort

Ryan Whiting
Youth Advocate (Friend) - Elementary Cohort

Administrative Team

Cory Berry-Whitlock
Manager of Grants and Institutional Relations

Estephanie Mejia
Operations Manager

Miskyat Oladosu
Development Operations & Engagement Specialist

Board of Directors

Nicole Borden
Development Consultant

Michael Cleary
Head of Sales Practices Oversight and Management, Wells Fargo

Dana Crawford
Vice President, Business Development, Suspect Technologies

Jim Davey
Marketing & Brand Executive

Deborah Drew
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Investments and M&A, Amazon

Allen C. Nunnally
Chief Business Officer, Voyager Therapeutics

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
*Alumni
Student, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth*

Consultants and Program Partners



Body by Legend

"They always try their best, and it makes me want to do my best."

- Waleska*, Achiever



"Having a mentor is like having another member of my family."

- Jasmine*, Achiever

"When I'm sad, they make me laugh."

- Elisha*, Achiever



"My mentor's helped me to open up and talk to people."

- Christopher*, Achiever

"I have someone to help me."

- Alisa*, Achiever





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184 DUDLEY STREET, SUITE 100, ROXBURY, MA 02119

INFO@FRIENDSBOSTON.ORG