

# Building Better Health

Beth Israel Lahey Health   
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

An update on BIDMC's Community-Based Health Initiative

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July 2023

## Community Grants Open House

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) recently [celebrated](#) the work of organizations with which it partners and supports through its Community Benefits program, including the Community Care Alliance (CCA) health center network and its Community-based Health Initiative. Over 250 people attended this community event on June 15th at the new Klarman Building, including Board members, grantees, staff from CCA health centers, BIDMC staff and clinicians, and members of the community.

Click below for some highlights from the event!

- [Presenters' digital posters](#)
- [Selection of photos from the event](#)
- [Brief video overview](#)



[View Photo Gallery](#)

## RFP Reminder and FAQs

In June, BIDMC released a Community-based Health Initiative Request for Proposals (RFP) inviting local organizations to apply for funding in the areas of housing affordability, jobs and financial security, and behavioral health. Applications are due September 1, 2023. Please visit [our website](#) for more information, including Frequently Asked Questions.



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## Save the Date: Annual Meeting

BIDMC's Community Benefits annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 19, from 5-7pm. Click [here](#) to RSVP.



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## Grantee Spotlights

In this section of the newsletter, we are highlighting BIDMC grantees and their funded programs. In future editions, we will feature additional grantees.

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### Asian Community Development Corporation (Housing Affordability Grantee)

[Asian Community Development Corporation \(CDC\)](#), with funding from BIDMC, enhanced their holistic housing support services by starting a matched savings program. The program reduces the racial wealth gap by assisting low-income, limited English speaking households build financial assets and purchase their first homes. Matched savings participants deposit \$100 into their savings accounts monthly and attend financial literacy workshops. The 1:1 match rate provides participants with up to \$1,200 at the end of the program. Julia Zhu, the Building Blocks Manager at Asian CDC, shared a few thoughts about the program.



Asian Community  
Development Corporation  
亞美社區發展協會

Building Homes. Empowering Families. Strengthening Communities.

**One programmatic success:** “During the program period, 5 out of 45 participants purchased their first home. We have helped participants develop the habit of depositing money into their bank account regularly, assisted participants in building financial assets towards the down payment on their first home and increased participant knowledge in financial topics including credit, budgeting, and banking basics.”

**One thing about the program you are looking forward to:** “Due to rising costs and limited housing stock in Chinatown, we are expanding the matched savings program to Malden, and I am looking forward to expanding the program to more locations such as Quincy, the city with the largest Asian population in Massachusetts. Many residents of Malden and Quincy still have deep connections to Chinatown.”

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### La Colaborativa (Jobs and Financial Security Grantee)

[La Colaborativa](#), with funding from BIDMC, connects young people in Chelsea ages 14-21 to an engaging real-world work experience as well as access to supportive workforce readiness training, weekly mental health

sessions, financial literacy and leadership training. Anna Hadingham, La Colaborativa's Director of Youth Programs, shared some reflections about the youth employment program.



# La Colaborativa

One programmatic success: “We piloted a mental health component as a response to the significant mental health cost of the pandemic. We began conducting weekly group therapeutic sessions that utilize a range of different participatory techniques, exercises and activities to elicit engagement, learning and to lower stress levels. At the end of this school year, over 70% of the youth participants reported that these sessions significantly improved their mental wellbeing and affirmed to us the critical importance of prioritizing mental health.”

One thing that is unique about La Colaborativa's programmatic approach: “La Colaborativa employs a uniquely holistic and community-rooted approach to youth development work. Our program staff are largely members of the community, and many of them are former youth participants themselves. Youth leadership and peer-to-peer facilitation skills are part of our young people's training. This creates a sustainable pipeline of local young adults with excellent community organizing skills that can return to facilitate our program or get involved in decision-making spaces in the community.”

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## The Family Van (Behavioral Health Grantee)

The Family Van, with funding from BIDMC, launched Healthy Roads, a program that trains non-specialist providers to offer brief evidence-based mental wellness support. Through the program, a team of multilingual and multicultural Community Health Workers (CHWs) guides participants through up to five free, personalized sessions where participants learn strategies and skills to manage life stressors and improve symptoms of anxiety and depression. Piper Derenoncourt, LICSW, MSW, MPH, the Assistant Director of Mental Health Equity Programs at The Family Van, shared a few reflections.



One thing that is unique about Healthy Road's programmatic approach: “Healthy Roads' client-centered approach meets clients where they are with warmth and openness to learn. We focus on the whole person and tailor the program to each client to increase engagement and ensure that we address what matters most to clients.

My colleague Rainelle Walker-White, the Associate Director of Health Equity Programs and a CHW said that, “Every encounter is unique, and everyone has a journey that allows them to persevere in the most challenging situations.”

One thing learned during program implementation so far: “We have witnessed the transformative power of community engagement in addressing mental health disparities in Boston. Deeply listening to the needs of our communities and actively shaping the program together has created a meaningful source of support for so many community members. We have learned that doing this work thoughtfully takes time, flexibility, community partnership and at times, requires us to think beyond the limits and norms of the traditional care system.”

## Contact Us

### Stay in Touch

Stay tuned for regular updates about BIDMC's Community-based Health Initiative. For more information, visit us at [bidmc.org/chi](http://bidmc.org/chi). For questions, please email [NIBCHI@bidmc.harvard.edu](mailto:NIBCHI@bidmc.harvard.edu).

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