



## Volunteer Newsletter

*Fall / Winter 2019*



ACTION FOR BOSTON  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

[bostonabcd.org](http://bostonabcd.org)

# Welcome to the new Volunteer Newsletter!

**We hope this will give you a window into the work of the Volunteer Office and show you how volunteers and interns support the mission of ABCD.**

Each year hundreds of individuals give their time, energy and enthusiasm to helping ABCD's programs in the communities that need it most.

Whether they're helping prepare taxes through ABCD's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, working with the youngest members of our community through Head Start or helping keep a roof over a family with our housing team it's no exaggeration to say that volunteers are vital to the work of ABCD.

In this issue, you can read how ABCD's volunteers are making an impact at one of our biggest fundraising events of the year, highlighting the organization's work at one of Boston's biggest outdoor concert series and hear how some of ABCD's most passionate volunteers – our Board of Directors – became involved with the governance of the agency.

As much as this newsletter is aimed at telling you about the work of ABCD's volunteers, we want to hear from you about your experience with our volunteers.

Are you a former volunteer or intern?  
Have ABCD volunteers helped you in the past?  
Are you an organization looking to provide volunteers to ABCD?  
Please get in touch and share your experiences!

Thank you for your interest in the ABCD Volunteer Office,  
and thank you to all our volunteers, past and present, for everything they do.

## New Volunteer Coordinator

### **ABCD has a new Volunteer Coordinator!**

After two years overseeing the Volunteer Office, Madeline Eleazar will be moving into a new role in ABCD's Human Resources department and Tim Palmer will be taking the reins.

Tim has been with ABCD since 2016 and, prior to his elevation to the Volunteer Office, worked as part of the team overseeing federal and municipal workplace charitable giving campaigns such as the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) and Commonwealth of Massachusetts Employees Charitable Campaign (COMECC).



*Tim Palmer*



Although now in a new role, Madeline remains extremely close to the Volunteer Office and is committed to helping the volunteer program grow and improve as a resources to staff, clients and the Greater Boston community.

Since her involvement with the Volunteer Office in 2014, Madeline has helped revolutionize the office's workings – from streamlining its paperwork to introducing an online volunteer management system that enables ABCD to track and monitor the contribution of volunteers to the agency's work.

A huge thank you to Madeline for her help and hard work over the years and best of luck with her new role.

The Volunteer Office's contact information remains the same.  
You can reach us at 617.348.6591 or by email at [volunteer@bostonabcd.org](mailto:volunteer@bostonabcd.org).

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## ABCD Rocks Rockland Trust Bank Pavilion

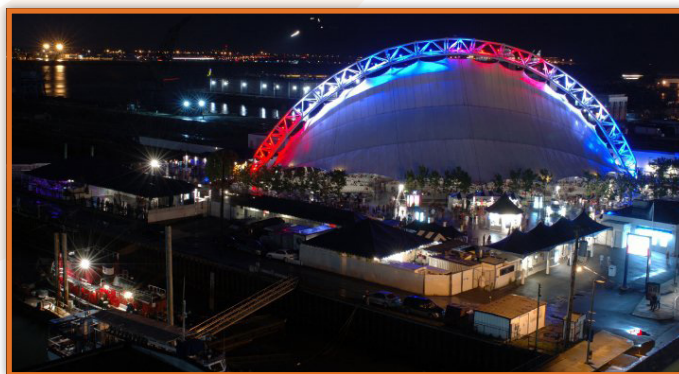
Each year music fans from Boston and beyond flock to the Rockland Trust Bank Pavilion in Boston's Seaport to hear bands and artists from around the world. The genres are diverse from classic rockers to emerging talent so the audience is always changing.

However, one thing that remains constant at the Pavilion is the ABCD kiosk at the Pavilion.

For the past seven years ABCD employees have volunteered to staff our kiosk at the pavilion, introducing concert-goers to the organization's work, answering questions, offering ideas about how people can get involved and, occasionally, receiving donations.

This year is no different and a revolving cast of diverse, enthusiastic ABCD staff have been at virtually every concert since the end of May distributing ABCD's materials and singing the agency's praises as acts as varied as Elvis Costello, Blondie, Steve Miller Band and Billie Eilish wow the crowds.

A huge Thank You to the Rockland Trust Bank Pavilion and Live Nation for helping us spread the word about the work that ABCD does in communities throughout Greater Boston and Mystic Valley.



*Rockland Trust Bank Pavilion*

Thank you as well to our volunteers who turn out – whatever the weather – to play their part in telling the community about ABCD's work.

If you find yourself at the Rockland Trust Bank Pavilion, please stop by our kiosk and say hello!



# Volunteer Appreciation Event

Each spring ABCD holds its Volunteer Appreciation Event to thank the hundreds of volunteers who donate their time to support the organization's work throughout Greater Boston and Mystic Valley every year.

This year the celebration was held May 8 in our Tremont Street offices and we were fortunate to be joined by a large number of volunteers from departments throughout ABCD along with CEO and President John Drew and COO and Executive Vice President, Sharon Scott-Chandler.

Opening the event, John Drew emphasized the importance of volunteers to the organization, noting that the scale of ABCD's work simply outstripped the capacity of its paid staff. Volunteers, he explained, bring hands, minds and empathy to the work of the organization, enabling it to reach more people with quality services. Sharon Scott-Chandler endorsed this, highlighting that ABCD is built on the hard work of volunteers and that its work simply could not be done without their help.

Also attending were a number of ABCD's Community Partners – organizations that partner with ABCD to either provide volunteers or facilities. These included Northeastern University, Capital One, Suffolk University and UMass Boston.

Speaking at the event, Northeastern University's, Mark Estes, who heads the university's Alliance of Civically Engaged Students – or ACES – program, detailed how the university saw volunteering through ABCD as a way for their students to engage positively with the community in which it lives.

One of the most exciting portions of the event was the official unveiling of the total funds recovered through ABCD's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, or VITA. This program provides low and medium income Boston area residents with free electronic Federal and Massachusetts state tax preparation through IRS-certified volunteers.



*Pictured left to right:  
Madeline Eleazar, Kathleen Monetteone,  
John J. Drew, Sharon Scott-Chandler Esq.*



*John J. Drew (ABCD President/CEO) giving opening remarks at the ABCD Volunteer Appreciation Event*

Bianny Suncar, director of ABCD's Mattapan Family Service Center, announced that during the 2018 tax season, ABCD staff and VITA volunteers completed over 5,500 tax returns and helped to return over \$10 million, helping individuals and families pay off debts and build savings.

All volunteers in attendance, along with ABCD's Community Partners received a certificate of appreciation to emphasize the value that ABCD places on what they do. Quite simply, without the help of our volunteers, many of the programs that ABCD runs would not be able to function at all, so a massive thank you to you all.

To see a round-up of this year's event, visit [youtu.be/GD2dc6kb2Zs](https://youtu.be/GD2dc6kb2Zs).

## Rev. Dr. Florence King

ABCD's work is overseen by its Board of Directors. The ABCD Board of Directors is comprised of public officials, representatives from the private sector and community members.



*Rev. Dr. Florence King*

Serving voluntarily, members of the ABCD Board are arguably our ultimate volunteers so in this issue we continue our series of profiles looking at why they choose to serve and how they became involved.

In this issue we meet Rev. Dr. Florence King, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors.

The Mystic Valley holds a special place in the heart of the Reverend Doctor Florence King. It's the place where she lives, where she raised her family and where she was ordained as a minister, so it should be no surprise that she is one of the biggest cheerleaders for Mystic Valley on the ABCD Board.

Rev. Dr. King first heard about ABCD when the director of the Mystic Valley Opportunity Center came to speak at her local community center.

"I was fascinated to hear about the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program and Head Start. Indeed, the Malden Head Start is run out of the church where I was first ordained!" explained Rev. Dr. King."

This proved to be the catalyst for Rev Dr. King's involvement with the organization and when an opportunity to sit on ABCD's Board arose through the recommendation of State Representative Paul Donato, she took it without hesitation.

"I'm proud to represent Mystic Valley on the ABCD Board, and I'm a huge cheerleader for ABCD in Mystic Valley," she said.

Having sat on ABCD's Board for only two years, she still sees herself as the 'new kid on the block', but this hasn't stopped her getting involved with as many ABCD projects and events as possible.

Particularly important for her are the graduation ceremonies for ABCD's William J. Ostiguy and University High Schools, which both provide high school education for non-traditional learners.

"It's hugely gratifying seeing people graduating and getting into top schools," said Rev. Dr. King. "I know they've put a huge amount of work in to get where they are so I do my best to get to as many as I can to cheer them on!"

This commitment echoes her approach to her work on ABCD's Board.

"I give my total self to my work on the ABCD Board," explained Rev. Dr. King. "As a minister, I'm a people person – I like being with other people – and I've been fortunate to be able to have a good education.

"I try to use all of the skills that I have to be the best I can be on the ABCD board.

"Serving on the board gives me a huge sense of pride. I'm able to point people in my community towards ABCD knowing that they'll be taken care of.

"I look forward to helping ABCD blossom and grow."

# Hitting It Out of the Park at Field of Dreams

**"If you build it, they will come!" say the mystical voices to Kevin Costner in the timeless baseball fan-flick Field Of Dreams.**

We may not have built it, but they certainly came. ABCD's Field Of Dreams has been a fixture on the fundraising calendar now for over 20 years, offering local businesses the opportunity of a lifetime: the chance to play at Fenway Park!

Corporate teams match up on the historic diamond and support ABCD's SummerWorks program, which places underserved Boston youth in paying jobs while providing them with dedicated mentoring, career readiness and important life skills.

This year's Field of Dreams took place on June 18 and saw 12 teams from – among others – Partners HealthCare, Boston Children's Hospital, NESN and TJX take to Fenway's fabled turf in a high-spirited fundraiser, raising \$240,000 for ABCD's Summerworks programs.

They were assisted by an army of volunteers from ABCD and our valued partner Deloitte. Over 50 volunteers assisted with everything from coordinating parking and paperwork to organizing breakfast and arranging for players and guests to see the secrets of Fenway on behind-the-scenes tours. They were absolutely invaluable in making sure that the day ran smoothly.

While careful planning and tenacious volunteers can achieve many things, one that they cannot control is the fickle New England weather. With torrential downpours, the final innings of the day were postponed to August 19 to ensure that all of the teams got their shot at Fenway glory.



*ABCD Volunteers greeting participants of Field of Dreams*



*ABCD Volunteers planning the day at Field of Dreams*

A huge thank you to all our teams for stepping up to the mound and supporting ABCD's SummerWorks program; to the Boston Red Sox for their generous organizational and logistical support and to our enthusiastic volunteers who generously give their time and help make each year's event better than the last.

For a full round-up of the 2019 Field Of Dreams, and for information about next year's event, visit [bostonabcd.org/event/abcdfielddreams/](https://bostonabcd.org/event/abcdfielddreams/) or contact ABCD's events team at **617.348.6244**.

## Volunteer Spotlight: Phyllis Matchett

Continuing our series talking to ABCD's volunteers, in this issue we meet Phyllis Matchett who volunteers with ABCD's Elder Services program.

Phyllis Matchett likes to be busy. Whether she's selling cosmetics, handling customer services, taking care of patients at New England Baptist Hospital or raising her granddaughter, she always likes to be on the go.

So when her granddaughter started school Phyllis found herself with time on her hands.

"I had heard of an organization called Operation ABLE," explained Phyllis, "Who help people over 55 who are looking to get back into the workforce or who are just looking for something to do, so I gave them a call."

ABCD has had a partnership with Operation ABLE for a number of years and Operation ABLE volunteers have helped in a number of ABCD's departments. After an application process and an interview, Phyllis found herself assisting ABCD's Elder Services team providing admin support.

Between the training supplied by Operation ABLE and the support of her colleagues, Phyllis feels a real part of the ABCD team.

"I've got a really good rapport with the people in the office," she said, "And the Foster Grandparents are really nice."

"Volunteering with ABCD gives me a purpose. Every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday I've got a place to be and work that needs to be done. It's a really good feeling."



Phyllis Matchett

"I hadn't worked for a while and I feel like I had got rusty. Volunteering with ABCD, I can just feel that rust falling off!"

When asked if she has any suggestions for anyone thinking of volunteering with ABCD, Phyllis has three pieces of advice.

"Have an attitude of gratitude!" she exclaimed. "Be open and compassionate and take the time every day to slow down and think, 'Today I am going to be helpful.'"

Through her placement, Phyllis has been able to gain skills and experience that she hopes she will be able to transfer into a full time job.

"Volunteer placements through Operation ABLE only last for a limited time," she explained.

"I'm confident that with the skills I've been able to gain volunteering with ABCD, I'll be able to move into a full-time role. Ideally, I would love to work in the healthcare sector – somewhere like a hospital – where I can help people every day."

With her enthusiasm and energy, we are sure the road ahead can only lead to success.



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# Volunteer with ABCD!

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Interested in volunteering with ABCD?

Here are a few of our current volunteering opportunities.  
For a full, up to date list, visit [bostonabcd.org/get-involved](https://bostonabcd.org/get-involved)  
and click on the 'Individual Opportunities' tab.

**Digital Marketing Intern** • Help promote the growth and strategic development of ABCD through digital and social media marketing.

**Field Operations Volunteer** (multiple sites) • ABCD's network of neighborhood offices are the first point of contact for many individuals and families in need of critical services. The Field Operations Volunteer will assist staff in the daily operations of the neighborhood program including food pantry operations, client intake, front desk and phone coverage and research.

**Housing Intern** (Downtown Boston and Malden sites) • ABCD's Housing and Homelessness Prevention Department works with clients to give them the assistance and skills they need to maintain their households or find new housing that is safe and affordable. The Housing Intern will assist the Housing Resource Coordinator to provide direct support to participants in search of permanent housing.

**Professional Development Mentor** • ABCD's GATE (Generations Advancing Together through Education) program provides services to Boston parents who have been historically unable to participate in training programs due to lack of child care. The program is looking for professionals with an understanding of the IT industry to provide coaching and mentorship to enable GATE trainees to access employment in the industry.

**Youth Services Ambassador** • The Youth Services Department is looking for Ambassadors to provide support and assistance to all programs in the department. Youth Services provides work-readiness programs to youth in the Boston area between the ages of 14 and 24 years old through our 5 different programs: WorkSMART, Future Protectors Initiative, Career Explorations, Early Childhood Education, and SummerWorks!

**Video Editing Intern** • Are you a video production whizz? Assist ABCD's video team in editing footage from special events and creating promotional videos for the agency. You'll be working on a tight turnaround time and be confident taking the initiative to create rough cuts while incorporating feedback from other team members to finish videos.

**Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Tax Preparers** (multiple sites) • Complete the IRS VITA Basic Level Tax training and certification and assist eligible Massachusetts residents with their tax returns.

Don't hesitate to contact the Volunteer Office if you have any questions about volunteering opportunities.

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## ABCD Leadership

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Yvonne Jones

*Chair, ABCD Board of Directors*

John J. Drew

*ABCD President/CEO*

Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq.

*ABCD Executive Vice President/COO*



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