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ALLSTON BRIGHTON

Ten nonprofits to share \$100k in grants to support programs in Allston, Brighton

Posted by Matt Rocheleau January 9, 2013 04:18 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Ten local nonprofits will receive a total of \$100,000 in grants to support programs in the Allston and Brighton neighborhoods, Harvard University officials announced Wednesday.

The awards were the fifth round of grants given out through a five-year program called the Harvard Allston Partnership Fund.

Created in 2008 by Harvard and the City of Boston in collaboration with neighborhood residents, the program has doled out a total of \$500,000 to 21 local nonprofits that together serve more than 3,500 residents of Allston and Brighton.

The fund has supported neighborhood improvement projects, youth and cultural enrichment, educational programs, and activities for families, seniors, and people with disabilities. Funding decisions are made by a volunteer board of community members who review grant applications.

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“The Harvard Allston Partnership Fund has supported vibrant community programming with real impact for hundreds of people in this neighborhood,” Mayor Thomas M. Menino said in a statement. “This is a city, university, community partnership that makes a difference in people’s everyday lives.”

The latest round of awards focused on supporting organizations that run learning initiatives and those that reach underserved populations.

The Gardner Pilot Academy school in Allston, which partners with Harvard, has received grant funding through the program for the past three years.

“Grants like this have been critical to the GPA and other area organizations that do important work in this community,” said a statement from the school’s director of extended learning time, Lauren Fogarty.

“We are constantly working to bring in funding, assess that funding, and develop and sustain high-quality programming for families,” she said. “This partnership enables us to provide that high-quality programming, broaden access by enabling parents to participate, and close the opportunity gap with families that can’t afford to take part.”

Commonwheels, a co-op that works to educate cyclists and provide biking tips, received a grant through the program for the first time this year.

“Anywhere where there is heavy bike traffic, there is a need for community support. We want to bridge the gap,” said a statement from Galen Mook, who heads organization. “We are delighted to be part of a broad network of nonprofits, including Harvard, serving this community.”

Recipients of the fifth round of grants are:

- Big Sister Association of Greater Boston: \$5,000 to sustain seven existing mentoring matches, and to match six girls from the waiting list with mentors, serving a total of 13 girls.
- Commonwheels Bicycle Co-Op: \$10,000 to provide classes, workshops, and events that teach 500 adults and children about the safe use of bicycles.
- Family Nurturing Center: \$7,025 to organize parent-child playgroups for 70 families who speak English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Participation

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will strengthen early literacy and improve school readiness.

- Friends of the Allston Library: \$13,000 to purchase sewing machines and cabinets, and to hire an experienced instructor to teach sewing and quilting to 80 families.
- Gardner Pilot Academy (GPA): \$21,000 to make 17 after-school and summer enrichment program slots affordable, and to support adult education programming.
- The Fishing Academy: \$5,685 for scholarships to 45 youths in summer fishing excursions for a week.
- West End House Camp: \$3,750 for scholarships to eight boys to attend overnight summer camp for two weeks.
- West End House Girls Camp: \$4,800 for scholarships to four girls to attend overnight summer camp for eight weeks.
- The Literacy Connection: \$10,000 to provide tutoring in English literacy and citizenship to 13 adults.
- Vocational Advancement Center: \$19,740 to purchase computers, software, and educational supplies to train 10 disabled adults for supported employment.

“We are proud to offer our support to this year’s HAPF recipients, who provide important services that directly benefit residents in the North Allston-North Brighton community,” said a statement from Christine Heenan, Harvard’s vice president for public affairs and communications. “As a community partner, Harvard is committed to supporting education and enhancing the quality of life for neighborhood residents, and the HAPF is one way we can achieve this together.”

E-mail Matt Rocheleau at mjrochele@gmail.com.

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