

THE VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program / Fall/Winter 2013

This issue: *Bring Us Your Briefs* p2 / *Reclaiming Marathon Monday* p3 / *Patient-Centered Medical Home* p5 www.bhchp.org

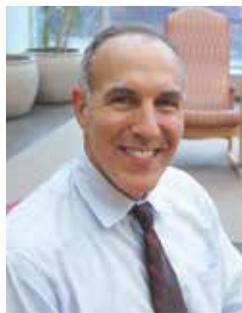
A MESSAGE FROM BARRY BOCK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Our Mission: The mission of Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program (BHCHP) is to provide or assure access to the highest quality health care for all homeless men, women and children in the greater Boston area.

We Offer: Primary Care, Behavioral Health, Oral Health, Family Services, Case Management, Addictions Services, Medical Respite Care, and Outreach



We Are: Administrative Staff, Building & Maintenance Staff, Case Managers, Dental Assistants, Dentists, Food Services Staff, Behavioral Health & Substance Abuse Counselors, Community Health Workers, Benefits Enrollment Specialists, Nurse Practitioners, Physicians, Physician Assistants, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Registered Nurses, Social Workers, Respite Aides, and AmeriCorps/Community HealthCorps Members



Since 1985, Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program (BHCHP)'s mission has been to provide or assure access to the highest quality health

care for all homeless men, women and children throughout Greater Boston. We accomplish this by hiring a motivated and dedicated staff, deploying them to where our patients are: the street, shelters, soup kitchens, and hospitals.

Our goal, and my vision, is to care for patients where they are and to do so without judgment. We strongly desire to break the cycles of homelessness and poor health, and we recognize that health care plays a central role in preventing these negative spirals.

Today, we face these challenges in the new light of health care reform. Thankfully, our goals and those of the Commonwealth and the nation are aligned:

- To improve the health of the individual patient, which we do through the provision of exceptional care;
- To improve the health of the population, which we do through assertive outreach and public health interventions;
- And to control costs, which we believe we have a responsibility to do, as do all health care providers.

- Finally, one untraditional goal among health care providers that we at BHCHP hold dear is to see that all persons are housed, without which true health equity cannot be realized.

I have the honor of being CEO, which is a recent development for me after nearly twenty-three years with BHCHP; I have proudly assumed the role after serving as the organization's COO for fifteen of those years. I am as humbled to be leading this organization as I am grateful for its existence and for the vibrant and skilled caregivers who bring our mission to life.

I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you over the years through tours, events, or various speaking engagements. However, as CEO, one of my privileges is to sign thank-you letters to all the supporters of our program. I cherish the opportunity to get to know you—even if it's only on paper.

BHCHP is a program of firsts: having created the first respite program, first Consumer Advisory Board, along with dozens of innovations in care delivery models all to serve a remarkable group of patients. I hope you take some pride of ownership—much of what we do is made possible by your support and contributions—for that I thank you. ■

If you would like the opportunity to see our work firsthand, I encourage you to visit us and meet our remarkable staff and patients. Please contact Linda O'Connor at 857.654.1050 or loconnor@bhchp.org for more information.

Founded in 1985, BHCHP employs the professional medical staff that **manages** the clinics and **delivers** the comprehensive health care at most of greater Boston's adult, family and domestic violence shelters (Pine Street Inn, The New England Center for Homeless Veterans, St. Francis House and more than 80 others).* BHCHP is the hands and face of health care for over 12,000 homeless adults and children each year at sites as diverse as Horizons for Homeless Children and the crawl space under the Longfellow Bridge. BHCHP has operated in-the-black while delivering medicine that matters to Boston's most vulnerable population for over 28 years.

In addition, BHCHP staffs, manages and delivers comprehensive health care at 2 hospital-based clinics on the campuses of Massachusetts General Hospital and Boston Medical Center and at a clinic on the backstretch at Suffolk Downs Racetrack. BHCHP also staffs, manages and operates our own Barbara McInnis House at Jean Yawkey Place, a 104-bed medical respite facility for homeless

adults with complex conditions like cancer, heart disease, pneumonia and diabetes who are too sick to live in a shelter or on the street and would otherwise require prolonged and costly hospitalization in the acute care rooms of Boston's hospitals.

When you support BHCHP you reach children and adults throughout greater Boston's entire safety net community when they are not only homeless but also sick. ■

“When you support BHCHP you reach children and adults throughout greater Boston's entire safety net community when they are not only homeless but also sick.”

* **A partial list of BHCHP's partners includes:** Above & Beyond/Brookview, Anchor Inn, Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence, Boston Family Shelter, Boston Living Center, Boston Medical Center, Bridge to Recovery, Brookview House, Cardinal Medeiros Center, Carolina Hills Shelter, Casa Esperanza, Casa Nueva Vida, Church of the Advent, Crittenton Women's Union, Crossroads, DOVE, The Eighth Pole at Suffolk Downs, Entre Familia, Families in Transition, Father Bill's & Mainspring, Finex House, Hildebrand Family Shelter, hopeFound, Horizons for Homeless Children, Housing Families, Inc., Kingston House, Latinas y Niños, Lindemann Center, Long Island Shelter, Margaret's House, Massachusetts General Hospital, Massachusetts Mental Health Center, Millenium House, Nazareth Residence, New England Center for Homeless Veterans, Paul Sullivan Housing, Pilgrim Shelter, Pine Street Inn, Portis Family House, Project Hope, Queen of Peace Shelter, Renewal House, Revision House, Rosie's Place, Safe Harbor, Project SOAR, Sojourner House, South End Community Health Center, St. Francis House, St. Mary's Women's & Infant Center, St. Ambrose, The Women's Lunch Place, and Woods-Mullen Shelter

CONNECT WITH BHCHP ONLINE

Read our patient stories and learn how to get involved at www.bhchp.org



Subscribe to our **YouTube** channel

Follow us on **Twitter** @BHCHP for daily updates

Like us on **Facebook** and keep up with BHCHP news

LAWYERS: BRING US YOUR BRIEFS

Briefs are nothing out of the ordinary to the law community. However, to the homeless community, they are. Having access to this simple, daily essential is as much about dignity as it is hygiene. Join BHCHP in our second-annual drive to collect new undergarments for Boston's homeless men and women. Every donation will help deliver comfort to one of the 12,000 patients that BHCHP cares for at more than 80 locations throughout Greater Boston. BHCHP encourages participation by any group of legal professionals or individuals that would like to collect briefs for our patients. Last year over 1,100 undergarments were collected! ■

For further information and additional assistance on the Lawyers, Bring Us Your Briefs drive, please contact Margaret Boles Fitzgerald, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, at briefs@bhchp.org.



TEAM BHCHP: RECLAIMING MARATHON MONDAY



Team BHCHP—(L-R) Sam Clark, Billie, Starks, Bill Ritchotte, and Ted VanderLinden— at a pre-race event at Brandy Pete's.

Running a marathon is no small feat: the countless hours of training, boundless dedication, and sheer athleticism required to propel one's body 26.2 miles.

For **Billie Starks, LICSW**, an addiction counselor for Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program (BHCHP)'s Suboxone Program and one of four people running on the organization's behalf, joining Team BHCHP was an opportunity to give back to the patients she was getting to know and care about.

She and her fellow BHCHP teammates, **Bill Ritchotte, Sam Clark, and Ted VanderLinden** never could have anticipated the events of April 15, 2013.

At mile 23 Billie began to hear chatter about what had happened near the finish line. As she passed a close friend she was warned to be careful. "Somebody said something about an explosion," her friend cautioned, "I'm sure it's nothing."

"I continued on through Kenmore Square, and noticed that the police officers along the route did not seem to be on alert...so after four and half hours of running, I figured I'd just keep going," Billie recalled. "It was at 25.6 miles that I was stopped in the middle of the course by other runners and spectators who simply said: 'stop running, it's over.'"

At the finish line, **Toni Abraham, ANP-BC**, BHCHP's Site Director for Pine Street Inn Clinics, was volunteering at the medical tent as she had for nearly

twenty years. She was in the company of numerous other medical professionals caring for people who'd fallen ill from their 26.2-mile run when the first bomb went off.

When the second bomb went off a few seconds later, Toni had just disconnected the IV of the runner she was attending to before the wheelchairs began rolling into the tent.

"...We worked as a team in every aspect of care, coordination, and mission. Some volunteers were there for the first time and others are die-hards who love the energy and camaraderie that we experience on Marathon Monday," Toni reflected. "None of us dreamed we would be facing the horrific, traumatic injuries that we saw that day."

In the wake of the tragic events that ensued on April 15th, the entire city of Boston came together in support of victims, survivors, and all others affected by the tragedy. BHCHP was no exception.

"BHCHP is grateful to have been able to support the Boston Medical Center's response immediately upon the arrival of victims of the blast. We deployed eight clinical staff and three security officers, and witnessed firsthand the amazing and organized emergency care provided by our BMC partner," recounted Barry Bock, CEO.

Six months after the attacks, Billie and Toni often think of the tragedy, but are ready to join those who will flock to the streets of Boston in 2014 to reclaim the beloved "Marathon Monday."

"Little things happen that make me reflect on the day, writing about it, seeing updates on the news, or passing someone on the street with a 'Boston Strong' shirt," claimed Toni, "but then I sense the commitment to get in there and do my best next year."

"I knew that day that I would want to try to run the marathon again next year," said Billie. "Not only because I didn't get to finish the race, but also because I wanted to band together with the entire community that was impacted on the day of the marathon, to show our solidarity and resilience."

Team BHCHP collectively raised nearly \$25,000, surpassing their fundraising goal of \$20,000. Because of their drive and ingenuity, BHCHP was proud to have been able to make an organizational donation to the OneFund Boston to support the needs of victims and their families.

We would like to recognize additional BHCHP staff members for their efforts and responsiveness during the Marathon aftermath: Claire Anagnostopulos, Nicole Ashton-Rice, Maggie Beiser, Denise De Las Nueces, Ashley Forde, Herby Formilus, Barbara Giles, Heidi Groff, Theresa Kim, Shane Leblanc, Andrew Lopez, Peggi Marini, Joyce McCrevan, Katherine Orlin, Javier Pagan, Martha Paquette, Denise Petrella, Betsy Stanley, Mark Stroman, and Melinda Thomas. ■

Thanks to the generosity of the John Hancock Non-Profit Marathon Program, we've been fortunate to field a team for the past three years. For more information about BHCHP's 2014 team, please contact Alyssa Brassil or Colleen Eagan at marathon@bhchp.org. To learn more about last year's team please visit www.bhchp.org.

"...we worked as a team in every aspect of care, coordination, and mission."



Billie at mile twenty-three.

HONORING BOSTON TREASURES AT THE MEDICINE THAT MATTERS GALA

Two of Boston's proudest achievements were honored at BHCHP's 2013 Medicine that Matters Gala: its world-class healthcare and the Boston Red Sox.

Red Sox Principal Owner **John Henry**, Chairman **Thomas Werner**, and President and CEO **Larry Lucchino** received the 4th Annual Tim Russert Award, for their personal generosity and for the partnership that has developed between the Red Sox organization and BHCHP. The Red Sox have championed BHCHP in numerous ways, including supporting its first-ever capital campaign, hosting the annual Sox for Socks donation drive and providing BHCHP with a platform to connect with a much larger community of supporters. Journalists Maureen Orth, Tim Russert's wife, and Mike Barnicle, his long-time friend, presented the award to the Red Sox.

The Red Sox award then took a delightful detour into a tribute to BHCHP's retiring Executive Director Robert Taube, as Lucchino and Henry presented him with a framed pitching contract. Taube, an avid Red Sox fan, retired in July after 20 years, 15 of those years at the helm

of BHCHP, helping the organization become a national model for homeless healthcare.

Longtime Dover resident and renowned Massachusetts General Hospital cardiac surgeon **Cary Akins, MD**, was also honored at the event, receiving BHCHP's Dr. Jim O'Connell Award. Dr. Akins helped launch BHCHP's capital campaign for a new home through a simple, but far reaching, gesture. When his friend and former patient Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric, and his wife Suzy offered to make a gift of \$1 million to his favorite charity, Dr. Akins introduced them to BHCHP.

Some 470 people attended the April 29th gala at the Sheraton Boston Hotel, raising \$520,000 that will be used to care for the complex medical and behavioral health needs of the 12,000 patients BHCHP cares for each year.

Special thanks to the evening's chairs, **Anne Finucane, Mike Barnicle, John Masterson** and **Edmund Murphy III** as well as major sponsors Bank of America, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Cramer, CVS Caremark, Jack and Suzy Welch and the Red Sox Foundation. ■



(1) John Masterson, Senior Vice President & General Counsel, Covidien and Edmund F. Murphy III, Managing Director, Putnam Investments
(2) Larry Lucchino, John Henry, and Cary Akins, MD
(3) Maureen Orth, Anne Finucane, and Mike Barnicle

LESSONS...

continued from back page

She said the day I took her to complete an application was the highlight of her life in this country. If she could only work in a setting as wonderful, caring, and giving as BHCHP, she would feel like God had answered her prayers. We toured the building and met staff members and the patients who are in their care.

We left that day with a sense of confidence that when a position opened up for a respite aide, Pierre Line would be asked to fill it and eventually she was. It was the first job she ever had that paid her a living wage, but what provided her with the greatest gift was the respect she was accorded for her work.

Less fortunate people in similar circumstances do not become competent and caring respite aides. Some become homeless. Pierre Line understands this. She sees each step

up in her life as progress and as a gift from God. The atheist teacher sees it differently. I credit her success to a refusal to accept defeat, to her willingness to sacrifice, to her will to honor her family, to her obsession to be successful and, of course, her faith. I suppose it can be all of these things. Whatever the cause we are grateful when life gives us more than just hope.

Like other people, my wife and I give to various charities to try to do our share. We have been lucky to have had good starts in life that led to successful teaching careers. Giving back is a responsibility as we see it.

I had never felt a personal bond with any one group until Pierre Line and I were given a tour of BHCHP's Jean Yawkey Place. There I saw "giving" in action. A staff of real people moving about, all

working toward one goal: the care and rehabilitation of the sick and poor.

The rapport between patients and staff, the tenderness and competence of those caring for patients, the trust and hope that shone on the faces of so many patients, the commitment of the entire staff to those who need and deserve our help, won me over. I knew that my support for this mission was important.

My wife and I soon agreed that when we leave this earth, we will leave behind something that will help BHCHP succeed financially. It will never be enough, but in some small way it will support a brave and daring and compassionate mission. ■

For more information about the Dennis Buff Bequest Society or to schedule a tour, contact Linda O'Connor at 857.654.1050 or loconnor@bhchp.org.

PATIENT-CENTERED MEDICAL HOME: Q&A WITH DR. GABRIEL WISHIK, MEDICAL DIRECTOR BMC CLINIC



In the spring of 2013, our Boston Medical Center (BMC) Clinic received recognition by the NCQA (National Committee for Quality Assurance) as an official Patient Centered Medical Home, Level 3.

What is the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) model?

PCMH is a way to provide primary care that is comprehensive and essentially treats people the way we all want to be treated. It was originally developed in the 1960s in the pediatric population. It has grown, evolved, and really exploded in the past ten years. Some of the different elements include:

- Ensuring that patients can identify who their care team is, so they get care when they need it. Patients should be able to have contact with the clinic that doesn't necessarily need to be face-to-face.
- Using electronic medical records wisely. Specifically using them to track quality and allow the practice to make interventions that will improve quality for individuals or populations.
- Focusing on communications with specialists within the rest of the health care system so that the clinic is not operating within a vacuum. There is a focus to make sure that tests and referrals are tracked, so no one falls through the cracks.
- Being able to identify which patients in the practice are at the highest risk for "X," "Y," or "Z." Whether that's dying, having problems related to their chronic diseases, or overdosing. The practices need to be able to identify those people and provide additional

services to them in order to avoid deteriorations, which means fewer hospitalizations or emergency room visits.

PCMH requires that you design a clinic that is able to make that kind of self-analysis—conduct ongoing quality review and monitoring of populations and then directing resources to where they are needed most. It's about having an agile and responsive clinic.

In what ways has PCMH changed the care coordination and delivery at BHCHP?

When we first started this project there were a lot of natural fits because we were already doing some of these things. But we have really bent over backwards to identify the highest risk people and create interventions that will be of good service to them. It's an ongoing process and we're still working on that. We are identifying people that have a lot of different kinds of problems, including a real focus on substance abuse and risk of overdose, among other things.

How does PCMH address the complex health needs of individuals experiencing homelessness?

By having a strong focus on primary care, something that has predated PCMH, we've really tried to connect people who are not usually connected to primary care. We've accelerated that as part of this project.

We've also expanded our ability to see people on a walk-in basis; we want them to be able to see us when they need us. We continue to try to improve access by increasing the number of walk-in appointments and occasionally the timing of our clinics to better serve the population.

What excites you most about PCMH?

Team-based care, which is really a core tenant of PCMH. This is something that we've done before. We've had teams throughout the program that work tightly together. The Street Team is a good example of a well-run unit that has been in existence for a while. The

HIV team is another example—a group of interdisciplinary people working together to provide care. In the rest of the program, although we've worked alongside each other, we didn't always work in an interdisciplinary manner.

As a result of PCMH, we have actively and intentionally associated our primary care and behavioral health providers, nurses, case managers, medical assistants, and front desk staff with a team. Then we devote time for case conferencing and discussing whatever is needed in order to provide better care. That's the most visibly, palpably impressive thing that we've done so far. It feels good and will hopefully result in good patient outcomes.

So what is next for the PCMH initiative?

We are really proud to have attained Level 3 recognition as a PCMH practice. That is the highest level possible and to do that with the challenges that exist with delivering care to our complex population is a big deal. We don't see it as an end point though. Right now, we are working on spreading the model to several other clinics in our program.

At our BMC clinic, we aren't finished either. To be a medical home, the practice must continue to change in order to improve quality and access to care. I think we are up to the challenge! ■

"By having a strong focus on primary care, something that has predated PCMH, we've really tried to connect people who are not usually connected to primary care."

News



(L-R) Catherine Minahan (BHCHP volunteer), Melissa Victorino (wife of Shane Victorino), Janna Mortensen (wife of Clayton Mortensen), and Sue Farrell (wife of Red Sox Manager John Farrell) collect socks from a generous fan.

With the help of **The Red Sox Foundation and NESN**, thousands of Red Sox fans brought new white athletic socks to our 8th Annual Sox for Socks event at Fenway Park on May 25th and 26th. During those two games we collected 10,600 pairs of socks and \$1,500

in cash donations to support our work, bringing our eight year total up to more than 100,000 pairs of socks collected and \$11,500 donated! Our sincere thanks to everyone who helped to make this year's event a grand slam!

BHCHP's founder and president, **James O'Connell, MD** is a 2013 recipient of the City Champion Award! The Boston Municipal Research Bureau and Shattuck Public Service Awards annually recognize an individual working in non-profit for their dedication and unselfish service to others in the City.

Barbara Cocci, LICSW, was honored for her outstanding contributions to community-based behavioral at the Association for Behavioral Health's 2013 Salute to Excellence. Barbara, BHCHP's Director of Behavioral Health, received the award for Excellence in Program Leadership.

Found in Translation honored **Peggy Andreas, RNC, BSN**, a member of BHCHP's Family Team, with the Culture Catalyst Award. The Family Team provides outreach services to homeless families in Boston area family shelters, motels, and domestic violence shelters. The award is presented to three inspiring individuals who emulate the organization's mission to reduce ethnic, racial, and linguistic disparities in health care by unleashing bilingual talent into the workforce.

Donate

You can make a big difference in the health and comfort of a homeless man, woman or child with a small gift. You can't imagine how much these items help our caregivers establish and maintain contact or how much our patients appreciate your kindness.

We can never have too many of these items:

- new white socks
- new underwear (men's and women's)
- diapers
- new sneakers
- gloves
- scarves
- winter hats
- gift cards:
 - CVS (\$5 and up)
 - Dunkin' Donuts (\$5 and up)
 - McDonald's (\$5 and up)
 - Stop & Shop (\$20 and up)

Why Socks? Access to socks is often limited for homeless men and women living in shelters and on the streets. Common infections such as athlete's foot thrive when damp socks are worn for days at a time. Frostbite is common in colder months, sometimes resulting in toe amputations. The best way to prevent such conditions is to keep feet clean and dry—very difficult if you spend your days outside. That's why BHCHP has a daily foot clinic at St. Francis House and regularly scheduled foot clinics at other primary care sites.

Contact volunteer@bhchp.org or call Alyssa Brassil at **857.654.1046** for more information, to find out about other small gift needs or to make arrangements for delivery.

YOUR SUPPORT WILL BRING...

the **Healing** comfort of a respite bed for a woman with severe skin abscesses with no other place to recuperate.

the **Dignity** of a talking glucometer for a young man who is newly blind and wishes to independently manage his diabetes.

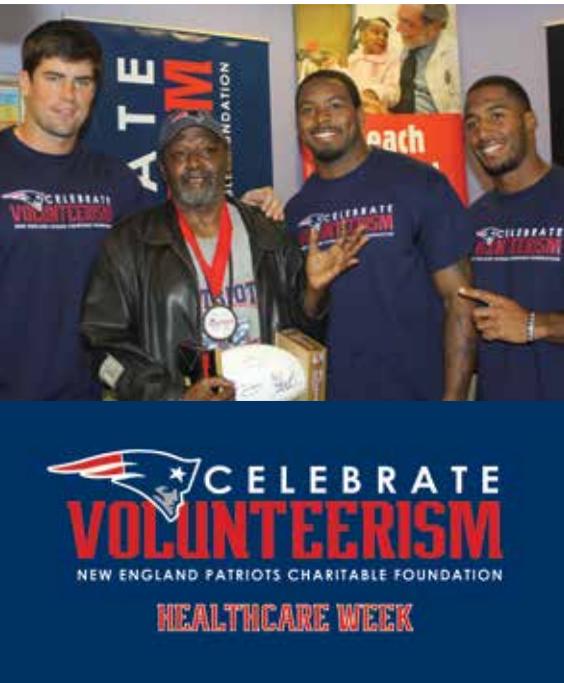
the **Trust** developed between a nurse practitioner and her patients who attend the weekly Transgender clinic for primary care and behavioral health services.

the **Hope** that a Community Support Worker can instill in a patient who is struggling with addiction, but seeking treatment at local methadone clinic.

[Donate Now](#)

www.bhchp.org

"PATRIOTS DIFFERENCE MAKER:" LARRY ADAMS



(L-R) Larry showing off his signed football with Patriots players Jake Bequette, Tavon Wilson, and Logan Ryan.

Larry survived the ravages of homelessness years ago and has never stopped helping other homeless men and women since.

In 1996, Larry helped to create Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program's (BHCHP) **Consumer Advisory Board (CAB)**—a dedicated group of homeless and formerly homeless men and women who provide input that shapes the programs BHCHP offers its 12,000 patients.

BHCHP's CAB was the first program of its kind in the country; there are now 40 around the country.

Over the past 17 years, Larry has been a committed member of the CAB, working actively on the creation of public policy initiatives and direct services for the men, women and children in BHCHP's care. His leadership abilities and practical ideas led to his election as Chair many times over within the last two decades. In 2006, Larry was elected to BHCHP's Board of Directors where he has represented the organization's consumers for nearly seven years.

Also a seasoned peer counselor, he offers practical advice on living with diabetes and other health complexities while in the throes of tenuous living conditions.

Despite being a diabetic, having three strokes, and undergoing several foot surgeries, Larry has always said "yes" to volunteering at BHCHP.

Each week **The New England Patriots Charitable Foundation** recognizes a deserving volunteer through their Celebrate Volunteerism initiative.

Throughout the season, the foundation focuses on different volunteer areas, with the goal of sharing examples of dedicated volunteers, building awareness of the need for volunteering, identifying and educating others about volunteer opportunities and inspiring New Englanders to become lifelong volunteers.

When the opportunity to nominate an individual engaged in healthcare volunteerism came along, BHCHP staff members thought Larry was a clear choice. The panel of judges tasked to name a winner agreed as well.

When asked about the impetus for his hundreds of hours of volunteer work on behalf of BHCHP and its patients, Larry answered: "the staff at BHCHP kept me alive, took such great care of me, and gave me a reason to believe in myself: this is my chance to give back."

On October 8th Larry was recognized as "Patriots Difference Maker of the Week" in a ceremony at Brockton Community Health Center. Patriots defensive players Jake Bequette, Logan Ryan, and Tavon Wilson presented him an honorary medal and autographed football to thank him for his continued commitment to giving back.

What started for Larry as a patient-doctor relationship at a time of personal need, grew into an active volunteer commitment, with Larry giving hundreds of hours each year to help inform BHCHP's staff while serving Boston's homeless population. ■

"The staff at BHCHP kept me alive, took such great care of me, and gave me a reason to believe in myself: this is my chance to give back."

There are a wide variety of opportunities for individuals and groups to impact the important work of caring for the health of Boston's homeless men, women and children. For more information about our volunteer opportunities, contact Alyssa Brassil at abrassil@bhchp.org or 857.654.1046.

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MEDICINE THAT MATTERS



Top: Ron and his wife, Charlotte Thompson;
Bottom: Pierre Line Romain

LESSONS IN GIVING: THE GIFT OF A STUDENT TO A TEACHER

Ron Paulus, Guest Contributor

My journey to Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program (BHCHP) was anything but linear. Although I had been a faithful donor for several years, my relationship with the program was quite typical. I had no idea how that relationship could grow, or how one person and one visit could change so much...

I met **Pierre Line Romain** when I was a volunteer tutor at the Jamaica Plain Adult Learning Program (JPALP). Prompted by the cruel hurricanes of 2008, Pierre Line had recently come to the United States from Haiti. Although she could speak Spanish, Creole, and French, her English was limited.

One day she said to me: "Teacher, I am going to go to a school to learn to be a respite aide. I need to make a better life for myself and this is the area I want for my future."

Together we worked tirelessly to achieve her goal. After she earned her certification, the next step was for her to find a job to apply her new skills. I knew how difficult that would be so we worked as a team in and out of the classroom: the atheist teacher and his student with an unshakable faith in God.

I was always on the lookout for opportunities for Pierre and had talked to several friends who would point me in directions they thought would be fruitful. As it turned out, one friend's suggestion was exactly the one Pierre Line was praying for. He suggested that I bring her to BHCHP to file an application for a respite aide position—an option that had not occurred to me.

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