



## The Lenny Zakim Fund

### Bridging Communities Newsletter



## Where We've Been...

### ***LZF's 21st Annual Awards Ceremony Celebrates 53 Community Heroes***

It's been a banner year for giving! Thanks to the ongoing, generous support of our committed donors, we exceeded the 2017 fundraising goal and awarded 53 grants to grassroots heroes at the Award Ceremony. What's more, with summer, special, and targeted grants to help those impacted by policy changes following the election, LZF will award a record total of *\$625,000 in grants in 2017.*

In February, we celebrated the outstanding work of each of our 2017 grantees at the 21st Annual Awards Ceremony, hosted by Rabbi Mark Sokoll, President/CEO, [Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston](#), and keynote speakers Mason Dunn of [Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition](#), Kelley Lane of [Sibling Connections](#), and Dunia Goncalves of [Resilient Coders](#). A special performance by youth jazz musicians from [Immigrant Family Services Institute](#) closed the evening with inspiration.

What a thrill it was to see our LZF family reunited in the spirit of encouragement, celebration, community commitment, and love. Year after year, the Awards Ceremony is a testament to the power of the gifts you make to the grassroots organizations we support. You are their partners in effecting social justice, equality, and access, one person at a time. Our thanks to the Slater Foundation, Eastern Bank, and Suffolk Construction whose sponsorship made this event possible.



**Please know that today, each and every gift is hard at work...today. And your additional gift now will keep these and other grassroots efforts alive and strong tomorrow.**



## ***Another Casino Night Success!***

Saturday, March 4, at The Four Seasons in Boston, was the hottest ticket in town, an evening filled with glitz, glamour, and gaming. Amy Belkin Mofenson, Sam Slater, and Josh Zakim chaired the event, Casino Night was hosted by Bravo's own [Andy Cohen](#) and featured moving remarks from Mayor Marty Walsh. Party goers won fantastic items and experiences at the silent auction and the exciting live auction - led by Josh Zakim and Andy Cohen.

The LZF Casino Night has sold out every year since its inception, and this year's event raised nearly \$300,000 for the organizations we serve. an historic high! Read all about it in the [Globe](#) and the [Herald](#).

Heartfelt thank yous to the co-chairs, the sponsors and everyone who made this beautiful night so amazing and successful. Hope to see you there in 2018!



## ***...And Where We're Going***

### ***Throughout March, Winston Flowers Helps You Brighten a Grantee's Day***

Through its [Charity in Bloom](#) program, Winston Flowers is proud to contribute 20% of the purchase price



PAIR receives flowers from a generous LZF supporter organization that is doing work especially important to you. At the same time, LZF will benefit as a result of your thoughtfulness and generosity.

from this gorgeous floral arrangement to The Lenny Zakim Fund.

While we hope you'll send an arrangement to someone you know and love, too, imagine how wonderful it would be for a member of our grantee community to open the door to be surprised and delighted by these beautiful flowers.

Your gift of this gorgeous arrangement can be a personal way to say thank you to a grantee

Simply [click here](#) and select the program you want to thank. Then, call 800-457-4901 and let [Winston Flowers](#) know that you want to send a Lenny Zakim Fund Charity in Bloom arrangement, the name of the grantee, and the size of the arrangement. Winston Flowers has all the contact information for the program you have chosen and will deliver a stunning arrangement to the organization of your choice.

Wondering what to say on a card? How about *These flowers are to let you know how important your work is to the Lenny Zakim Fund and to me.*

## **Meet Team LZF Marathon Runner Christina Catarano**



I am so proud to be part of Team LZF and help an organization that brings people together from the community and lifts people through times of struggle. At 39 years old and nine weeks pregnant, I received a devastating breast cancer diagnosis. I knew that when treatment was over, I wanted to run the Boston marathon. A

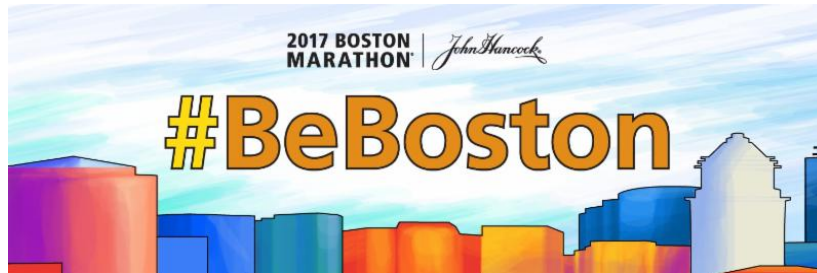
friend encouraged me to reach out and let those around me help, and I realized it really is about community, about helping each other so we can all rise up and be as proud of ourselves as we are of those around us. It wasn't just about me and my struggle with a disease, but about setting an example for my children. I wanted them to see me work hard to be as healthy as possible, while helping to make our world a better place. I can't wait to cross that finish line and reach my goal. But I'm also really excited to be out running on race day, while so many wonderful



people from the Boston community cheer us on and keep us going in our journey to Boylston Street.

***Christina will join LZF runners Jennifer Clark, Timothy Harder, Pamela Sargent, and Renee Seman. We wish them a great run! To support Team LZF in this year's Boston Marathon, please click here.***

***Our thanks to John Hancock for making this program possible.***



***LZF COMMUNITY HEROES*** spotlights two of our amazing grantee organizations, *The Muslim Justice League and Refugee Immigration Ministry.*

## **New Outreach From New Communities**

***LZF grantee Muslim Justice League shares Lenny's dream of making the world a better place to live, work, and thrive.***

In these difficult political times, The Lenny Zakim Fund is proud to support The Muslim Justice League (MJL) in its work to make the phrase "and justice for all" a reality. In keeping with its mission of educating, organizing, and advocating for human and civil rights threatened under national security claims, MJL has now expanded its focus to address emerging federal policies that threaten the human and civil rights of Muslim American citizens, immigrants, and refugees. "So many folks have reached out," says MJL Executive Director, Shannon Al-Wakeel, "and most prominently a number of churches, including the Arlington Street Church in Boston and others."

MJL has seen an uptick in interest and support as a result of national media coverage of the Muslim ban and other policies affecting local Muslim communities. As travel concerns increase in the Muslim community, MJL continues to offer "Know Your Rights" workshops for communities Muslim and non-Muslim - on rights regarding law enforcement. "To expand our impact," Al-Wakeel says, "we recently trained a group of volunteer attorneys to present this content, and we're also training law students on how to present these workshops as well."

The Muslim Justice League is also focused on the potential of the new administration to cast spurious allegations against Muslim civil society, which may result in asset freezes and malicious prosecutions. Al Wakeel says "Support from The Lenny Zakim Fund has been invaluable in allowing us to sustain this work."

## **RIM Responds to Increased Deportation Fears**

***The Lenny Zakim Fund is honored to support the efforts of grantee Refugee Immigration Ministry (RIM), whose mission is to align interfaith congregations across Eastern Massachusetts in support of newly arrived asylum seekers.***

In light of the recent changes in immigration policy, including increased media attention to undocumented immigrant deportations, Ruth Bersin, Executive Director of the Refugee Immigration Ministry (RIM) sees first-hand the impact on asylum seekers. "We have many more people coming in for assistance," she says, "and they are very afraid."

RIM's programs for immigrants and asylum seekers include case management, job preparation, and spiritual care givers, as well as clusters made up of representatives from several congregations in a given community who volunteer to support new arrivals in an interfaith, cooperative process. They offer a community-based opportunity for clients to begin their new lives. RIM Clusters are currently in Arlington, Chelmsford/Lowell, Lexington, Marblehead, Metro-North, Newton, North Shore, and Metro-West. Clusters work with asylum seekers to provide housing, food, transportation, and community support, until the client is able to work. "The clusters are also bringing faith groups together in the community, and they are learning about each other," Bersin says. "LZF support has been very important for RIM in providing these services,"

For more information about RIM, their work, and upcoming events, visit [www.r-i-m.net](http://www.r-i-m.net).

## Lenny Zakim's Dream: To Make the World a Better Place



Click to view a beautiful video created by Alan Chebot and [Parallax Productions](#)

### The Lenny Zakim Fund is Grateful to Our Sponsors

 Eastern Bank

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*cares*