



Boston Collegiate Charter School

FY21 Annual Report

to the Community

Thriving Through Change



bostoncollegiate.org

Dear BCCS Community,

Having wrapped up another unprecedented school year, we take tremendous pleasure in writing to express our deep gratitude and appreciation. Over the past year, members of the Boston Collegiate Charter School (BCCS) community came together to support one another in more ways than we could have imagined, and we hope you share our pride and wonder as we look back at all our students and alumni accomplished.

Although remote learning continued for much of the year, BCCS students and staff rose to meet every challenge, once again demonstrating the enduring strength of our school.

In the face of the year's adversity, BCCS found innumerable ways to shine:

- Our incredible educators developed innovative strategies to keep students engaged and get them what they needed to be successful in the classroom and online.
- Dedicated teachers and paraprofessionals offered in-school learning all year long for our highest need students, and BCCS was among the first Boston schools to get most students back into the classroom.
- We continued our commitment to being an anti-racist school in principle and practice, responding to racial injustice by empowering students with the tools to communicate and empathize across differences and to advocate for what they believe in.
- We upheld our standards for academic excellence, aware that every year of school is precious, and it is up to us to make the most of each one.
- Through our COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund, our community rallied to support our families who were struggling to secure basic necessities such as internet access, food, clothes, and resources to pay bills.

Unwavering support from our Board, donors, and community made these efforts possible. You helped ensure that BCCS had the resources to adapt and respond to the uncertainty of the past year without losing sight of our mission. **THANK YOU!**

And now, to the present: We are delighted to welcome students back for in-person learning this fall. At this moment of transition, there is no one more capable or knowledgeable than Jenna Ogundipe, BCCS's new Executive Director, to guide our school. We know that whatever the next year might bring, BCCS will prosper under her thoughtful and experienced leadership.

Thank you for being part of our BCCS community. We look ahead to the future with excitement!

Warm regards,



Shannah L. Varón
Shannah Varón
Executive Director,
July 2011–July 2021



Nicole Chang
Nicole Chang
Chair, Board of Trustees

BCCS prepares
every student for
college by fulfilling
the core values of
scholarship,
belonging,
passion,
responsibility,
and **integrity.**

Meet Jenna Ogundipe, BCCS's New Executive Director

Dear BCCS Supporters,

I am delighted to greet you in my new role as Executive Director. Although I have been at BCCS for nearly 20 years, the start of this school year seems unlike any other. I feel an acute responsibility to ensure that all of our students experience academic growth and acceleration, not just remediation. Our students deserve to be stimulated and challenged in the classroom and through their extracurriculars.

For more details about my experience and vision for the school, please enjoy the excerpt, below, of a recent conversation I had with BCCS parent and Board member Jose Brandao.

As I contemplate the challenges and joys ahead, I am grateful for Shannah's remarkable legacy and for your partnership and commitment to our mission. Thank you for being part of what makes BCCS so special!

With gratitude,



Jenna Ogundipe
Jenna Ogundipe
Executive Director

JOSE: What first brought you to BCCS? What has kept you here for 20 years?

JENNA: I actually answered an ad—an old paper ad in the *Boston Globe*. I remember my interview vividly. The school was full of teachers working with kids, teachers laughing with teachers, kids laughing with kids. And I remember thinking, this is the place. It was a community, and it's that community that has kept me here all these 20 years later.

JOSE: During your years here, how has the school changed?

JENNA: So many things have changed and evolved. When I first joined the community, we were in South Boston and the school was South Boston Harbor Academy. And now we're in Dorchester under the name Boston Collegiate Charter School. Grade levels were 40 students, and now they near 100. Our staff has quadrupled to 137 strong. And we have become significantly more deliberate and purposeful about how we welcome students into our community.

JOSE: What is your long-term vision for the school to help sustain our growth and success?

JENNA: I am determined that we can truly be **a beacon of both scholarship and belonging**. I want our school to be known for having an incredible academic program, full of discovery and inquiry. And I want our school known for having an incredible sense of belonging so that when every child walks through the door, they feel loved and seen. Lastly, I want our staff to have a continued sense of feeling valued and respected. After all, without great teachers, nothing else is going to matter.

Scan the QR code or go to <https://bit.ly/BCCSJenna>
to watch the interview and find out where Jenna
spends her time when not on campus.



“ Jenna has always embraced change at BCCS with **kindness** and a firm hand. She played a critical role in helping to grow the arts from what was, initially, a very limited program. Her guidance helped us to define and reach our goal of developing a flourishing arts curriculum that enriches all our students. She is a master of weaving the **strength** of what is happening with a vision of what can follow. ”

— Michael Eder

Lower and Middle School Art Teacher,
Art Department Co-Chair

kindness
strength

Scholarship

Whether remote or in person, BCCS teachers, staff, and students worked hard over the past year to ensure that our school maintained rigorous standards of academic **excellence**.

With a return to remote classes in the fall of 2020, BCCS teachers built on practices developed the previous spring to renew their focus, refresh their approaches, and provide students with the attention and resources they needed to stay engaged and learning. BCCS college counselors met with students and families remotely throughout the college application process to ensure that the hurdles posed by the pandemic would not restrict students' choices. Director of Alumni Programming Jon Clark met (and texted) with BCCS alumni at a higher frequency than in past years to help them make decisions and manage the stress of attending college remotely. When in-person classes resumed in February and April for the Lower and Upper Schools, respectively, we celebrated not just being back together, but the communal effort that helped everyone reach this milestone.

“Ms. Chavez helped me with math a lot because I didn’t understand, but she explained in a way that I could understand.

That helped a lot.”

— **Madisyn G.**
6th grader



“The teachers did a good job with the [virtual] system. You had to be on time. If you’re not, they give a call to your parents.

They did virtual gym, virtual art. They set everything up perfectly.”

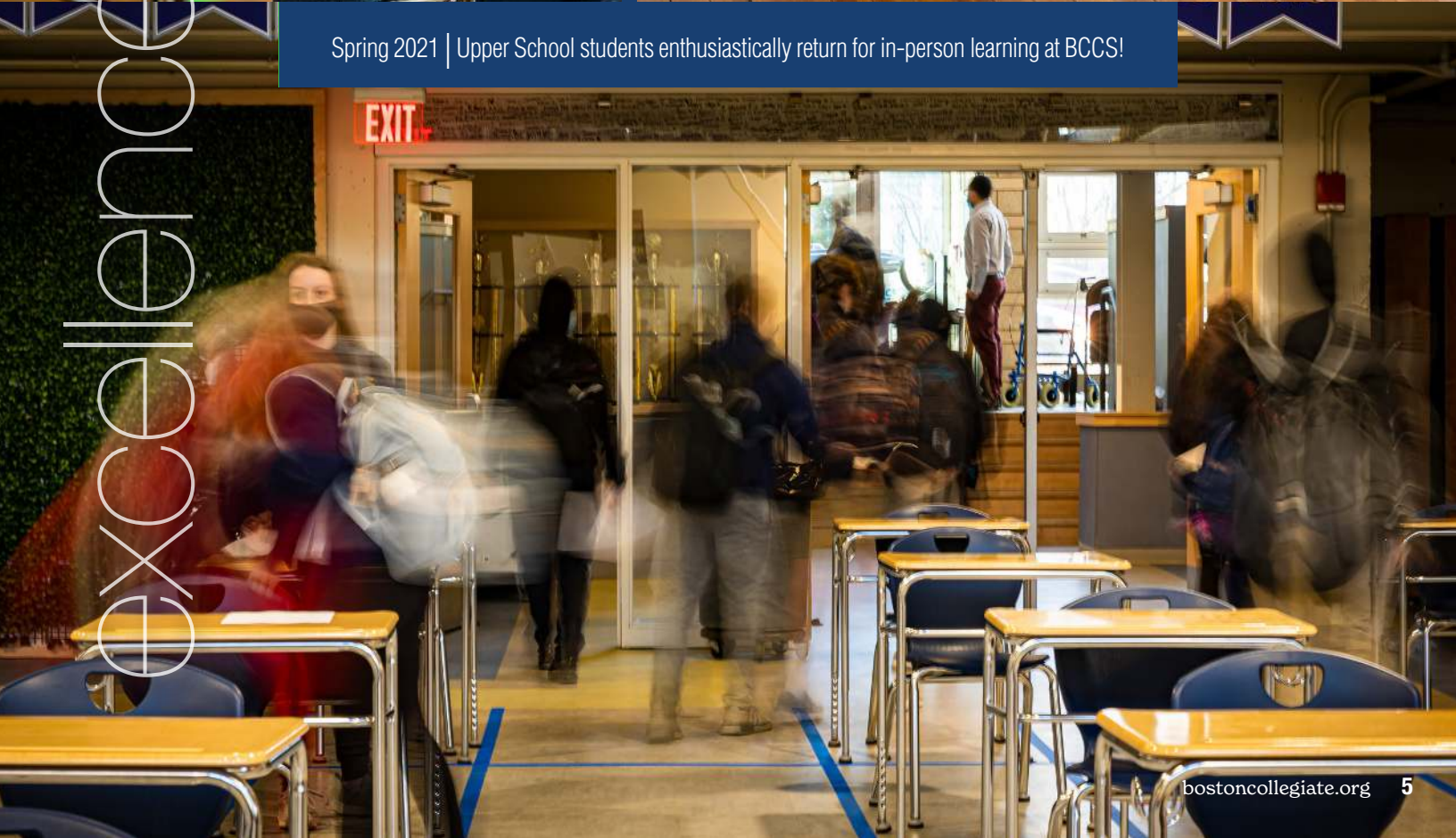
— **Jhamir H.**
8th grader



In a recent survey of BCCS alumni finishing their first year of college, **100% of respondents said they felt prepared for over-prepared for the rigor of college classes.**



Spring 2021 | Upper School students enthusiastically return for in-person learning at BCCS!



excellence

Belonging

In a year full of uncertainty, BCCS maintained our unwavering commitment to the values of **inclusivity** and **equity**, welcoming every student and working to create bridges across differences.

BCCS has long upheld the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, but since 2019, we have renewed our focus on living these values daily as a community. Over the past year, BCCS continued a shift from a conventional merit/demerit system of discipline to a schoolwide practice of restorative justice in which students whose actions have negatively impacted others engage in dialogue with those whom they have harmed. In partnership with the Center for Restorative Justice at Suffolk University, many BCCS staff and some Middle and High School students received training in facilitating these dialogues.

Our school took steps to foster an inclusive culture in a number of other ways as well:

- BCCS began an **audit of the history curriculum** to ensure that it incorporates the perspectives of traditionally marginalized peoples.
- Staff members participated in trainings to build their intercultural competencies and examine internalized biases.
- BCCS regularly hosted virtual and in-person events to celebrate the cultures of our students.
- BCCS developed opportunities for students to reflect on their own identities and experiences, including through a **senior-year capstone course on identity, equity, and race**.
- In partnership with the Partnerships in Education and Resilience (PEAR) Institute, a joint initiative of Harvard University and McLean Hospital, BCCS staff developed customized plans and resources to ensure the success of students with unique academic, social, emotional, and physical needs, all of which were made more acute by the pandemic.



Abner and Jonathan D. work hard together.

Over the past year, Abner Lopez, a paraprofessional in our High School, worked one-on-one with 10th grader Jonathan D., who receives services from our Student Support Department. While most staff and students remained home at the start of the 2020-21 school year, Abner returned to school last September to provide individualized instruction to Jonathan for the entire year. Abner enhanced Jonathan's independence, focus, and overall learning experience by introducing new instructional practices and modified equipment.

EQUITY



In September and October 2020, BCCS celebrated Latinx culture and heritage. Here, 12th grader Hannah R. shares her work during a Latinx Paint Night.

inclusivity

“BCCS is a diverse community, and as a school, we do our absolute best to educate students about democracy...

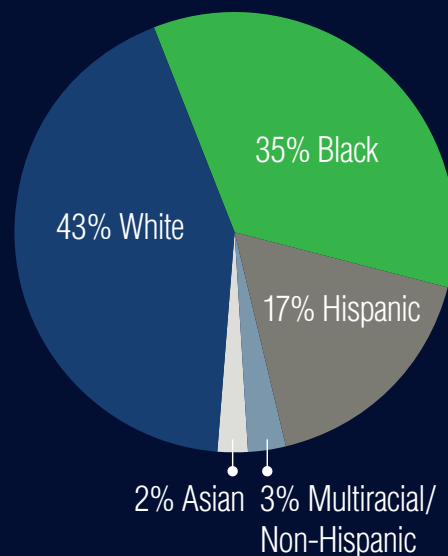
There is real disagreement here, and yet, real **respect**, and when we get it right in the classrooms, which we strive to do, our students are engaged in exactly the kind of exchange of ideas and critical thinking that a **democracy**, and our nation, needs now more than ever.”

— Shannah Varón

in a statement responding to the events of January 6, 2021



2020-21 Student Demographics



Passion

Throughout the past year, BCCS staff and students found creative ways to ensure opportunities for students to exercise their curiosity, joy, and passion—in the classroom, on the field, and on the (virtual) stage.

Art teachers organized supply deliveries and drop-offs to ensure that students could continue developing their skills and expressing themselves through painting, drawing, and more. Staff members hosted events such as paint nights to give students opportunities to come together and to learn even when school was closed.

Two members of BCCS's High School Debate Team competed in the Boston Debate League's City Championship. Jaleel C. (grade 10) and Wesley E. (grade 10) represented BCCS against students from Charlestown High School in a debate on criminal justice reform to win the City Champion title in the Junior Varsity division.

BCCS students participated in numerous varsity sports, including soccer, girls' volleyball, track, cross country, flag football, basketball, softball, and baseball.



Scan the QR code or go to <https://bit.ly/BCCStheater> to view the opening number from BCCS's Lower and Middle School Spring 2021 virtual production of *The Little Mermaid*!

“Art making brings on a different set of challenges that foster personal **growth and reflection**, as well as collaboration at a level that is rare in other spaces at school. Having this outlet throughout my time at BCCS and especially in AP Art in senior year pushed me to seek experimentation and vulnerability within what I create, which is a valuable lesson that I will implement moving forward in whatever I do.”

— Emma H.

BCCS Class of 2021 alumna enrolled at Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MassArt)

Coach Parker and members of the girls' varsity soccer team pose after a match. The team made it to the championship game, capping the season with a strong second-place finish.



Integrity & Responsibility

As part of their community service requirement, our BCCS seniors completed more than

4,400 total
volunteer hours
at organizations including

Cradles to Crayons,
Codman Square
Library Garden,
and South Boston
Little League.

BCCS empowers students to act with knowledge, kindness, and empathy and recognizes that we are all part of a school community striving to live our values. During the pandemic especially, our responsibility to care for one another came into sharp focus.

In response to the pandemic, the BCCS community demonstrated a remarkable commitment to the welfare of our families and a profound sense of shared responsibility for the common good. We are grateful to the supporters who contributed more than \$100,000 to BCCS's COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund. BCCS distributed nearly \$80,000 in gift cards to families for basic needs and offered assistance in paying utility bills, and the BCCS Family Engagement Team organized a food pantry and coordinated home deliveries of **hundreds of bags of groceries**. Beginning in November 2020, we became one of the first schools to launch a COVID-19 testing program for students and staff, which we are continuing in this new school year to limit the impact of the virus in our school.



Scan the QR code or go to <https://bit.ly/BCCSCovid> to learn more about how the BCCS community came together during COVID-19.

Nurse Jen Ryan



Shows off her card after receiving her first dose of the vaccine.

Each year, through the Fund for Teaching Excellence, BCCS staff and students nominate teachers and administrators for Core Value Awards, which honor and reward conduct that exemplifies the values of scholarship, belonging, passion, integrity, and responsibility. In 2020-21, School Nurse Leader Jen Ryan exhibited all of these traits. She led the establishment of the school's COVID-19 testing program and served as an indispensable advisor to school leaders, staying on top of the latest developments in the pandemic to offer **guidance** that was timely and medically sound. As a colleague noted in his nomination, Jen "not only exemplified our school's core values, **she was our invaluable core.**"

guidance

Class of 2021

College Matriculation List

- Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology
- Berklee College of Music
- Boston College
- Bridgewater State University
- Brown University
- Bryant University
- Bunker Hill Community College
- Cornell University
- Curry College
- Eckerd College
- Fisher College
- Hampton University
- Massachusetts College of Art and Design
- Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
- Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
- Massasoit Community College
- Morgan State University
- Northeastern University
- Quinnipiac University
- Regis College
- Roxbury Community College
- Sacred Heart University
- Saint Anselm College
- Simmons College
- Southern New Hampshire University
- Suffolk University
- SUNY Stony Brook
- Syracuse University
- University of Massachusetts Amherst
- University of Massachusetts Boston
- University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
- University of New England
- University of New Hampshire
- Wentworth Institute of Technology
- Worcester State University



Scan the QR code or go to <https://bit.ly/BCCSgrads2021> to see video and photos from the in-person June 2021 graduation!



Matriculation and Graduation

The Class of 2021 enjoyed an in-person graduation ceremony on June 10, 2021, at the Lawn on D in South Boston.

All 71 members of the class of 2021 earned acceptance to four-year colleges.

Since the first graduating class in 2004, 77% of BCCS alumni have completed a degree program or are on the path to graduate. Nationally, only about 60% of students who enroll in college complete a degree, and only 14% of low-income students complete a degree program.

“The Class of 2021 has never been afraid to disrupt the system.

We are the class to speak up.

We have never and will never settle....

We are a force to be reckoned with.

We shall conquer the inevitable adversity that is to come with

grace.

We shall discover our true passions, dreams, and destiny.”

— Katie M.
Class of 2021 Valedictorian

13th Annual Celebration

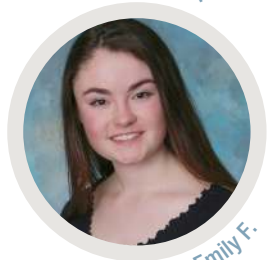
Virtual Festivities and Fundraiser

On October 16, 2020, BCCS held our Annual Celebration and Collegiate Cup Trivia Challenge—the 13th such event, but the first that was held virtually. Although we were uncertain how the online setting would impact this critical fundraiser, supporters of the school stepped up in an unprecedented way, blowing past our fundraising goal to raise **more than \$475,000**. We could not be more grateful to everyone who made the night such a resounding (and fun) success!



Michael P.

BCCS Class of 2017 alumnus Michael P. spoke about how BCCS helped him choose to study statistics and music at Amherst College.



Emily F.

Emily F., BCCS Class of 2019, addressed guests from her dorm room at Boston College, naming how her experiences at BCCS helped her build confidence and leadership skills.



At our 2020 virtual celebration, students and staff shared all that BCCS inspires them to **be**.

This year's 14th Annual Celebration takes place the evening of Thursday, September 23rd.

We will be virtual again to ensure everyone's safety during what promises to be another entertaining and engaging evening!



Scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/BCCS14th> for more details about this year's event!

Our Supporters

July 2020-June 2021

A fundamental philosophy at BCCS is that every student should feel seen, welcomed, and loved. Staff members work every day to make good on this promise, but we could not do so without the financial support of so many in our community. Through your generous contributions, you demonstrate your care and your **commitment** to BCCS students.

Your philanthropy enables BCCS to offer comprehensive programming and support services alongside a superior academic experience, providing students a uniquely empowering environment in which to grow and thrive. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the individuals, corporations, and foundations who share our vision and join BCCS in our mission to prepare each student for college.

“In my years at BCCS,

I have seen firsthand that whenever there is a need, our supporters step up to ensure that our students have what they require to succeed.

It's humbling and motivating to know such a community of donors has our back. Thank you!”

— Jenna Ogundipe

\$100,000+

Linde Family Foundation

\$50,000 - \$99,999

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Up to \$249

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 Wellington Management
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 Program
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In-Kind Donations

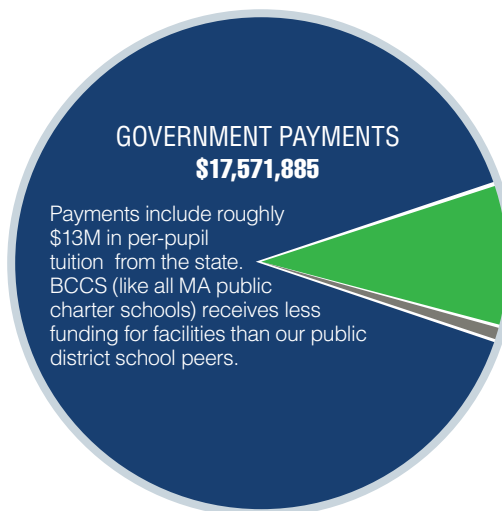
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 New England Aquarium
 Otto Pizzeria
 Paint Nite by Yaymaker
 Pemberton Farms
 Salem Witch Museum
 SoulCycle
 Tasty Burger
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 Van Wagner Communications
 Wachusett Mountain

Financials

BCCS's generous community of philanthropic supporters enabled the school to respond to COVID-19 with comprehensive resources and innovative strategies for remote learning and robust safeguards when students and staff returned to classrooms. Even as we saw expenses rise with the precautions necessary to reopen safely, financial contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations, as well as increases in state and federal grants, positioned BCCS to meet those costs without sacrificing elements of our budget focused on learning, enrichment, and the well-being of our students, families, and alumni. Your support meant that the 2020-21 school year could be one of growth and learning for our students.

Thanks to you, we thrive.

REVENUE TOTAL \$19,638,368



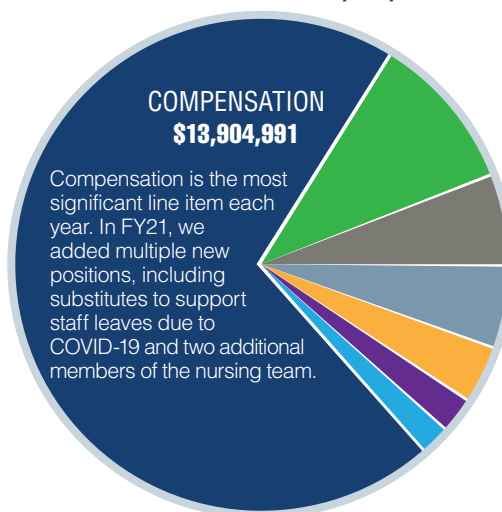
Such activities include:

- College persistence and alumni support programs
- In-school and extracurricular arts
- Financial support to vulnerable families
- Restorative justice work
- New costs associated with responding to COVID-19

OTHER / \$135,325

Other sources of revenue include student activity fees, our on-site daycare, and interest income.

EXPENSE TOTAL \$19,638,368



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**Completed Board service at close of FY21*

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Charles Li
Chessye Moseley
David Moyer
Mark O'Leary
Aishwarya Roy

For more information, please contact:

Rachel Langer
Director of Development Events and External Affairs
rlanger@bostoncollegiate.org

Beth Newhall
Director of Development Communications and Operations
bnewhall@bostoncollegiate.org

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