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# East Boston

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### EAST BOSTON CENTRAL CATHOLIC CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT



PHOTOS BY MARIANNE SALZA

East Boston Central Catholic School choir singing, "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" during their "Twas the Night Before Christmas" concert held on Dec. 15.



Students in First through Third Grade singing, "Feliz Navidad." See more photos on Page 12.

## LOOKING BACK AT 2023

### Some of East Boston's top stories this year

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

As the sun sets on 2023, let us take a look back — in no particular order — at some of the standout stories in East Boston over the last year.

#### PLAN: East Boston Saga

Throughout 2023, the Boston Planning and Development Agency's (BPDA) neighborhood planning initiative — PLAN: East Boston has been a hot topic. For months, the agency has gone back and forth with residents to formulate recommendations that would impact zoning, transportation, and more. After a year full of neighborhood activism and meetings, the story has still not come to an end, as the BPDA plans to release the final version of the plan on January 5th.

#### Summer Tunnel Closure

This past summer, East Boston residents dealt with

the impacts of the Summer Tunnel closing from July 5th to August 31st. As part of the closure, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) worked on aspects of the tunnel, such as its ceiling and walls, before eventually reopening on September 1st.

East Boston High School Wins School On The Move Prize

Back in November, East Boston High School beat out two other schools to win the coveted School On The Move Prize from EdVestors, which netted the school \$100,000. After years of hard work from staff and students, the school was honored with the award for its improvements.

See YEAR IN REVIEW Page 2



AGNIESZKA RYTYCH-FOSTER PHOTO

Piers Park Sailing Center marked its 25th year sailing the Harbor out of East Boston during the sailing season this year with a community celebration and free sailing.

## Sen. Lydia Edwards's celebrates birthday in Eastie with community members

Story & Photos by Marianne Salza

Senator Lydia Edwards celebrated her 43rd birthday on December 13 at the Reel House. Supporters, as well as local and state

officials, honored Edwards for her leadership, reflecting on her accomplishments in housing and LGBTQ+ pride.

"I have been honored to work in partnership with

her," said Attorney General Andrea Campbell, introducing Edwards. "We have been in the trenches for a long time together."

See EDWARDS Page 8



Leverett Wing, Tina St. Gelais Kelly, Kathy Carangelo, Attorney General Andrea Campbell, Senator Lydia Edwards, Representative Adrian Madaro, and Gary Yu are all smiles during State Sen. Lydia Edwards' birthday celebration held recently at the Reel House.

## After further review... Jim Kearney one of the best!

By Cary Shuman

Jim Kearney made a tremendous impact on

high school and college football as a referee and a supervisor of officials.

On Monday, Dec. 18

the Gridiron Club of Greater Boston officially acknowledged Kearney's 47 years of excellence and dedication with the presentation of the John Baronian Award for Lifetime Contributions to the Football to the former East Boston High School football captain at the chapter's awards banquet at the Burlington Marriott.

Joined by his wife, Jane, and his daughter, Sarah, for the momentous achievement, Kearney said he was humbled by the recognition of his officiating career and his promoting of the game of football.

"It's indeed an honor to receive this prestigious award," Kearney said.

**A leader in the field**  
During his distinguished career, Jim Kearney, 69, often traveled throughout New England to give talks to college

See KEARNEY Page 2



COURTESY PHOTO

Award recipient James Kearney is pictured with his wife, Jane, and his daughter, Sarah, after receiving the prestigious lifetime achievement award recognizing his outstanding work as a college football referee and coordinator of officials.

**TRASH DELAY**  
Due to the New Years Day Holiday falling on Monday 1/1/24, trash will be delayed by one day  
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See you again on the 2<sup>nd</sup>



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# Boston Public Health Comm. encourages vaccination as respiratory virus cases rise

Special to the Times

Recent data analyzed by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) shows low vaccination rates and an increase in cases of respiratory viral illness in Boston. BPHC recommends people protect themselves and their communities from getting sick, especially as they travel and gather with loved ones.

According to data from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), twice as many people have been hospitalized with the flu or COVID-19 in Boston compared to October. BPHC also measures virus levels in wastewater in Boston to track transmission of infection and has noted significant increases in the amount of COVID-19, Flu, and RSV. Compared to two weeks ago, the amount of COVID-19 in wastewater across the city of Boston is 23% higher, the flu virus is 23% higher, and RSV is 34% higher.

Staying up to date on vaccines for respiratory viruses, such as COVID-19, flu and RSV is an important strategy to reduce the risk of severe illness and hospitalization. Using DPH data, BPHC found only 15.7% of people in Boston have received the updated COVID-19 vaccine. The data also show only 33.8% of people in Boston have received a flu vaccine this season.

“Vaccination is the best way to prevent severe illness and hospitalization from COVID-19, flu and RSV, and it is not too late to protect yourself this season,” said Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, Commissioner of Public Health and Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission. “We encourage residents to take advantage of opportunities for free walk-in COVID-19 vaccination and testing as well as flu shots.”

To make it easier for people to get vaccinated ahead of the holidays, BPHC is holding a vaccine event at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building in Roxbury on Friday and Saturday, December 22 and 23. With a winter

wonderland theme to kick off the holidays, the vaccine event will offer free COVID-19 and flu immunizations, giveaways, face painting, treats, and an opportunity to meet Santa. (See flyer attached.) For RSV vaccination, people should reach out to their healthcare provider to determine eligibility.

Standing COVID-19 and flu vaccine clinics remain at the Bruce C. Bolling Building and Boston City Hall:

- Boston City Hall – 1 City Hall Square, Room 115

- § Open Mondays from 7 am - 1 pm and Wednesdays from 12 - 5 pm.

- § Holiday Hours:
  - Monday, January 1 - CLOSED

Follow the recommended respiratory virus safety steps to reduce your risk:

- Stay home when sick.
- Consider wearing a mask:

- If you must leave the house while sick.
- If you are going to be in crowded outdoor spaces.

- And/or, if you are at a high risk of severe illness.
- Have COVID-19 rapid testing kits available at home to test if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

- Visit walk-in and by-appointment testing sites throughout the City.
- Seek treatment from a trusted healthcare provider if you test positive for COVID-19 or flu and are at a high risk for severe disease.

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Regularly disinfect and clean high touch surfaces.

Older adults, adults aged 60 and older, children younger than 5 years old, pregnant people, and people with chronic medical conditions are among those at higher risk for severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

BPHC has several resources to help people stay healthy ahead of the holidays, including COVID-19 test kits and health education materials in 12 languages. Visit [boston.gov/bphc-infectious-disease](https://www.boston.gov/bphc-infectious-disease) to learn more.

# Year in Review // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

## Substation Protests

Activists have been hard at work this year protesting the construction of an Eversource Substation on Condor Street due to fears of flooding at the site. There have been several demonstrations at the site — some of which led to arrests — all in the name of stopping construction.

## Haul Road

In what has been a polarizing subject over the last year, groups for and against the creation of a potential bypass road stemming from MassDOT's Route 1A Corridor Study have voiced their opinions on social media and even the East Boston Times Editorial section. Those for the bypass, in part, say it will take truck traffic off of 1A and residential streets. Meanwhile, those opposed theorize that it would bring more traffic and harm the environment.

## Sacred Heart Parish Celebrates 150 Years

Sacred Heart Parish had its 150-year celebration back in June with a Mass featuring a homily from Cardinal Seán O'Malley and later a luncheon at Spinelli's in Lynnfield.

## Eastie Farm's New Greenhouse

In March, the non-profit unveiled a state-of-the-art greenhouse at 6 Chelsea Terrace. The greenhouse is not only geothermal but also produces zero emissions, the first of its kind in New England. The greenhouse now enables Eastie Farm to grow food within it year-round.

## Piers Park II Completed

In recent news, Piers Park II construction has been completed, making way for a brand new 4.5-acre park. This month, members of the community, the Massachusetts Port Authority, and the Piers Park Advisory Committee celebrated the park's opening. Some features



John Walkey, GreenRoots' Director of Waterfront and Climate Justice Initiatives, addresses the crowd.

of the park include a play area, new trees, and much more.

## East Boston Branch Library 10th Anniversary

The East Boston Branch of the Boston Public Library celebrated 10 years at its current location on Bremen Street in November. As part of the celebra-

tion of the milestone, the branch held an event hosting community members and elected officials. Additionally, the branch was presented with a certificate of recognition by Manuela Villa Gomez, East Boston's Neighborhood Liaison, and a citation from State Representative Adri-

## East Boston Gets New Police Station

Elected officials and members of the Boston Police Department celebrated the completion of the new District A-7 police station in January. The new station on East Eagle Street was the first complete new District police station in over a decade and is the culmination of an almost \$30 million investment.

As is the case with most lists, some stories did not make the cut. However, this list truly only scratches the surface of how many newsworthy moments occurred in East Boston this year.

If you are in the mood to reminisce as we welcome 2024, you can always look back at the year that was in the East Boston Times archives at <https://eastie-times.com/>.



MAYOR'S OFFICE PHOTO BY ISABEL LEON

Mayor Michelle Wu joins Eastie Farm and many community members in cutting a ribbon to open the new Eastie Farm Greenhouse in March 2023.



PHOTO BY JESSE CUILLA, INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER GROUP PHOTOGRAPHER

Re:SET Boston brought live music and concerts back to Suffolk Downs this summer. As development continues at the Suffolk Downs site, the track remains open to the public and available for events. Shown above, the crowd in between sets on the track at Suffolk Downs during the inaugural concert of the Re:SET Boston Concert Series, held June 16 - 18.

# Kearney // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

athletes about officiating. “I basically tell everyone that, “officials aren’t bad guys,” said Kearney in jest.

Kearney has earned the universal respect of his colleagues, who elevated him to numerous leadership positions in the sport. He has served as the president of the Boston chapter of the Eastern Association of Intercollegiate Football Officials (EAIFO), the Association of New England Football Officials (ANEFO), and the Eastern Football League, while also heading the EFL's on-field officials.

Kearney is the past supervisor of officials for the Boston public schools, holding that post for 27 years. He is currently the supervisor and coordinator of officials for two Division 3 leagues, the Commonwealth Coast Conference and the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference.

Kearney was a high school football official for 47 years and a NCAA college football official for 40 years. He is retired from his position as the dean of students at the Umana Academy in East Boston. He is also past president of the East Boston Chamber of Commerce and the East Boston Athletic Board. He is the chairman of the Fred L. O'Brien Scholarship Committee, helping the Athletic Board raise more

than \$350,000 for East Boston scholar-athletes.

## Football a positive influence in his life

“Football is a very important part of my life,” said Kearney, reflecting on his career as a football player at East Boston High School and UMass Amherst.

“When I was a freshman at East Boston High School, I was kind of going in the wrong direction on the streets of East Boston,” recalled Kearney, who grew up on Princeton Street and was the son of Jim Kearney Sr. and Jean (Malone) Kearney. “At the beginning of my sophomore year, the high school gym teacher told me, ‘You better be at football practice this afternoon or you’re going to flunk gym for the rest of the year.’

“So, I went out for the football team, and lo and behold, I made the team. I



James Kearney, recipient of the John Baronian Award for Lifetime Contributions to Football, delivers his acceptance speech at the Gridiron Club of Greater Boston Awards Dinner.

became a two-way starter for two years and captain of the team in my senior year (1971). I also became the class president. Football changed my life. It has taught me a lot about life. The attributes that I have received from football are discipline, leadership, loyalty, courage, and character. It has given me

the ability never to back down when the going gets rough.”

To this day, Kearney said he keeps in touch with his high school football coach, Carmen J. Scarpa. “I talk to him several times a year, and I consider him a friend,” said Kearney.

## Rep. Madaro offers his congratulatory wishes

Rep. Adrian Madaro was among the dignitaries and East Boston residents congratulating Kearney on his prestigious award.

“Jim Kearney leaves an indelible mark on the people he meets,” said Madaro. “His lifetime contributions to the sport of football reflect his tenacious work ethic as well as his commitment to others. I’m pleased to see his legacy celebrated and recognized by the Gridiron Club of Boston, and I congratulate him on his accomplishments.”

# Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
Border Development LLC	Larosa, Francesco	Eutaw St #6	\$300,000
Mendez, Christian J	War Canoe Red LLC	309-311 Sumner St #2R	\$300,000
Bedoya, Luisa	John M Lopez 2021 RET	1072 Saratoga St	\$1,375,000



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# DCR Dishes on Constitution Beach Playground Renovation

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

Last week, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) held a public information meeting to discuss its plans to renovate the Constitution Beach Playground.

"We are very excited to renovate this playground. This is one of the playgrounds definitely identified that needs a renovation," said Sandra Libby, a DCR Playground Planner.

Libby laid out several goals DCR wants to accomplish as part of the playground renovation.

These goals include improvements to safety, accessibility, and environmental impact, as well as increases in the number and types of play activi-

ties, shade, and maintainability, along with adding other site improvements and furnishings.

Libby explained that the current playground, which was built in 1999 and had a small renovation in 2015, has some equipment that is not in great condition.

As part of the renovation, DCR plans to use a poured-in-place rubber surface instead of the sand currently used at the playground. The playground will also feature an oceanic and coastal theme through the color of the poured-in-place rubber and the play equipment that features things like sea creatures.

Some examples of the equipment include slides,

swings, and more. Additionally, the playground has been laid out so one side will house the equipment for kids ages 2 to 5 and the other for children ages 5 to 12.

"What's really nice about this design is that a lot of it, most of it is accessible from ground level so that everybody can participate as much as they can," said Libby.

The playground will also feature new entrances and will be fenced-in. To illustrate an example of the fence and new surface planned, Libby showed a photo of Paul Revere Playground.

The renovation will also provide other benefits, such as bike racks, a water fountain, and seating ar-

reas. Additionally, there are plans to add native plants to the site.

Following Libby's presentation, there was time for questions from those who attended the meeting.

One attendee had asked about the poured-in-place rubber and wondered if sand would still be used because the plans showed blue and beige sand-like colors for the surface.

However, Libby said, "There will be no sand within the playground anymore."

The same attendee asked about the location of the entrance and exits. "The two entrances are very much the same as what they are now," said Libby.

"It's just that we pulled

the playground... we've pulled it away from the lefthand side of the area so that we can have the bubbler outside of the playground," she added.

The attendee had a final question and wondered if there could be issues with importing equipment due to supply chain issues.

However, Libby explained that the company they would be working with to order the equipment is based in Minnesota.

Another attendee also had questions. They had asked if there were plans for benches for adults — which there are — and if the new design is larger than the existing one — which it is slightly.

As for the renovation's

timeline, the construction plans are slated to be completed this winter. Libby said she hopes to put in the playground equipment order this coming March, with construction beginning in late Summer of 2024 and opening later that Fall.

If you would like to view the meeting and the presentation, which features the plans for the renovated playground, you can visit [www.mass.gov/dcr/past-public-meetings](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/past-public-meetings).

"I'm just very, very excited about this project. For me, it was definitely one on the list that really needed a renovation," said Libby.

# Boston Harbor Now announces annual New Year's Eve Waterfront Ice Sculpture Stroll

Special to the times

Boston Harbor Now has announced the return of the annual New Year's Eve Waterfront Ice Sculpture Stroll, with more ice sculptures than ever before in a variety of locations across the Boston Waterfront. The Waterfront Ice Sculpture Stroll will kick off on Sunday, December 31, starting at 1 p.m. and will continue until dusk.

The Waterfront Ice Sculpture Stroll is a part

of Boston Harbor Now's "New Year's Eve on the Waterfront" programming and features a lineup of activities for guests of all ages to help ring in the new year. This year's event will showcase over 35 handcrafted ice sculptures hosted by businesses and cultural sites along the waterfront, making it the largest Sculpture Stroll in Boston Harbor Now's history and the Region.

Boston Harbor Now

also announced that new locations have been added for guests to view these ice sculptures, which will span from Roxbury to Revere, just north of Boston. New locations include Boston Margaritaville, the Sam Adams Tap Room in Faneuil Hall, the Charlestown Navy Yard, and Wulf's Fish at the Massport Boxes at the Fish Pier.

Guests are encouraged to snap a photo next to their favorite sculptures

to be entered into Boston Harbor Now's Staycation Giveaway. Each picture taken outside an ice sculpture with the tag @BostonHarborNow will count as an entry to win prizes like restaurant gift cards, an overnight hotel stay, tickets to the New England Aquarium, a family four-pack to the Boston Harbor Islands, and more.

Waterfront Ice Sculpture Stroll Details are as follows:

Date: Sunday, December 31, 2023

Time: 1 - 5 p.m.

Location: Across the Boston Waterfront

Additional Activities:

- First Responders Touch a Truck at The Envoy Hotel from 12:00 - 4:00 pm

- First Night Boston Art and Music performances at Boston City Hall Plaza

- Holiday Lights on the Trellis at Christopher Columbus Waterfront Park

- Hatchlings lights exhibit on the Rose Kennedy Greenway

- Snowport, Seaport's much-loved Winter Village

- and more at #BundleUpBoston

To learn more about the Waterfront Ice Sculpture Stroll and other programs that are part of Boston Harbor Now's New Year's Eve on the Waterfront, visit <https://www.boston-harbornow.org/nye/>.

# Mayor Wu announces 2024 Civic Summit for community leaders, members

Special to the Times

Mayor Michelle Wu announced the Civic Summit, an event focused on uniting neighbors, civic leaders, and non-profit advocates in a dynamic forum featuring panels with local leaders and advocates. The Civic Summit, organized for the first time by the Mayor's Office of Civic Organizing, will be held Saturday, January 13, at the Howard Thurman Center for Common Ground at Boston University. This event will feature a fireside chat with Mayor Wu, a networking tea hour, and five additional sessions hosted by community leaders. Up to 200 community members can register for the free event online at [www.boston.gov/civic-engagement/civic-summit-2024](http://www.boston.gov/civic-engagement/civic-summit-2024).

"Boston has always been a leader among cities because of the civic leaders in our neighborhoods and communities. The City of Boston is excited to connect and learn from all our civic leaders at this Civic Summit, which will convene those who know our neighborhoods best to share resources and best practices to empower our residents," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "I'm thankful everyday for the strong civic leadership that drives Boston, and I look forward to seeing everyone at the summit."

The Civic Summit is designed to foster connections to share knowledge and ignite inspiration for positive change within the diverse communities in Boston. The theme for this year's summit is "Community Over Everything." The City of Boston hopes that attendees will represent every corner of Boston to network and to identify opportunities to connect and collaborate after the summit.

"I am so excited to breathe new life into the Civic Summit," said Nathalia Benitez-Perez, Director of the Mayor's Office of Civic Organiz-

ing. "My hope for this year's summit is that it serves as a crucible of knowledge, forging insights that empower present and future civic leaders to translate wisdom into tangible actions within their communities."

"I believe knowledge is power. I am really thrilled about the upcoming Civic Summit," said Margaret Farmer, Co-Chair of the Jeffries Point Association. "I look forward to connecting with other community members and learning more about how city government works, so I can better advocate for my neighborhood."

The Civic Summit will offer a fireside chat featuring Mayor Wu facilitated by Jeneé Osterheldt, Boston Globe's Deputy Managing Editor For Culture, Talent, and Development, and Founder of A Beautiful Resistance.

Featured sessions include:

- Empowering Change: How to Fund Your Inspiration led by Eric Leslie, Founder and Lead Organizer of Union Capital

- Becoming a Civic Leader - Training the Next Generation of Leaders featuring panelists Lee Pelton, President and CEO of The Boston Foundation; Matthew Broude, Co-founder of The Queer Neighborhood Council; Commissioner Kristen McCosh, The Disability Commissioner for the City of Boston; Brianna Bourne, Boston University Class of 2024

- EmpowerED: Leveraging Social Media for Community Impact led by Emily Schario, Head of Content for Boston Globe's B-Side

- Sustainable Cities: Empowering Communities for a Greener Future, a fireside chat with Oliver Sellers-Garcia, Boston's first Green New Deal Director and a cabinet-level Senior Advisor to Mayor Michelle Wu, and Jaye Meakem, Boston Harbor Now's Community Engagement Manager

"The Civic Summit was planned to empower neighborhood community leaders and individuals in Boston who have a desire to make a difference in their community, but don't know where to begin," said Brianna Millor, Chief of the Community Engagement Cabinet. "This is going to be an incredible opportunity for constituents to be in the same space and to get City Hall out of City Hall."

This year's Civic Summit is a collaborative effort between community partners, City staff, civic leaders, local businesses, and residents to help shape an event that will be empowering and transformative for all attendees. The City of Boston is excited

to work with Anais Summer Day, a local woman-owned event planning company led by Anais Ramos. Ramos is the lead event planner for the Civic Summit. Side Presents, a Boston-based creative production company, will be the Civic Summit's featured emcee. Boston University is the lead partner of the Civic Summit. Boston University and The Boston Foundation are event supporters.

"Boston University is honored to host the City of Boston's Civic Summit, in support of Mayor Wu's commitment to fostering community engagement and collaboration," said Kenneth W. Freeman, President Ad Interim of Boston University. "The

Howard Thurman Center for Common Ground with its mission to connect people through creative, shared experiences is a fitting venue for this forum. We're pleased to play a part in facilitating conversations reflecting diverse viewpoints and experiences as we work to build a more inclusive and vibrant community."

"Our work at the Boston Foundation has taught us time and again that the best solutions are those that are driven by and responsive to the knowledge and insights of community members and leaders," said M. Lee Pelton, President and CEO of the Boston Foundation. "We appreciate Mayor Wu for creating this opportunity

to listen, learn and share ideas for making Boston a more equitable city."

The Civic Summit is free and open to the public with registration. A light breakfast and lunch will be served. For more information and to register visit [boston.gov/civicsummit](http://boston.gov/civicsummit).

The Mayor's Office of Civic Organizing is committed to collaborative partnerships and programs that encourage proactive community engagement, awareness, and service in our neighborhoods. Follow the Mayor's Office of Civic Organizing on social media @bostoncivorg and visit [boston.gov/civicsummit](http://boston.gov/civicsummit) to register and learn more about the Civic Summit.

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# Forum

GUEST OP-ED

## Massport CEO Job Description: Presented by the Logan Community Clean Air Coalition

**Dear Editor,**

In response to Massport's search for a new CEO, the Logan Community Clean Air Coalition and AIR, Inc. have seized the opportunity to express our description of the ideal candidate for the position, from the perspective of East Boston residents. In collaboration with other community groups, we have drafted a job description for the Massport CEO.

(español abajo)

### Background:

The Massachusetts Port Authority ("Massport") was created by the legislature in 1956 to stimulate the economy through ownership and operation of the Port of Boston, Logan International Airport, and Hanscom Field. Massport was granted land, money, political autonomy, and the power of eminent domain to accomplish this goal. Massport currently uses more than 2,384 acres in East Boston, South Boston, and the Town of Winthrop.

### Massport Airports

Logan is Massport's flagship airport and profit center, earning \$825 million in annual revenues and covering the Authority's losses at Hanscom, the Cruise Port, and Boston's container and port facilities. Massport does not presently use its revenues to cover the economic losses related to traffic congestion and environmental impacts on health for local residents. Given its economic importance to the Authority, Massport has promoted expansion of Logan, as opposed to using a multi-airport solution, and Logan now serves 78% of New England's air travel market. Despite its market share dominance, Logan is landlocked and now operates beyond its design capacity causing traveler safety concerns, and frequent runway incursions.

Without legislatively mandated environmental accountability, the politically autonomous Port Authority has filled 1,800 acres of tidal flats, and leveled harbor islands, neighborhoods, and an Olmsted Park to expand Logan, inciting public outrage since the mid 1960's. Logan currently produces 810,000 tons of greenhouse gasses per year and over 35,000 pounds of air pollution per day, increasing childhood asthma, COPD, and other morbidities in nearby communities. Further expansion of Logan will likely require expansion into surrounding neighborhoods and come with steep political, permitting and public relations costs.

Logan revenues subsidize development of Massport's other airports, helping Hanscom capture market share for private jet service, and also pushing activity there beyond tolerable capacity, driving public opposition. Massport has invested \$100 million to increase Worcester Regional Airport's capacity despite the facility's disadvantageous

location and poor ground access connections.

### The Port and Cruiseport

Boston, the US's leading port until the 1840's, has steadily fallen in rank to the 43rd largest in cargo tonnage by 2021. Despite this decline, Massport spent \$850 million on environmentally destructive harbor dredging and high tech cranes (later raising concern over cyber security) in hopes of courting Chinese supertankers which might use the new Panama Canal. Despite serving the 6th largest economy in North America, Massport's Flynn Cruiseport, located in the traffic-congested Seaport and suffering a lack of convenient and affordable parking, ranks 28th in passenger boardings among major cruise destinations in North America.

### Position and Responsibilities:

The CEO/Executive Director will:

Direct the management of Massport's businesses, finances, and human capital to ensure that Massport operates in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner through development of a strategic plan which will:

- Lead an organizational culture shift to value accountability and accuracy, and repair relations with community stakeholders
- Produce accurate evaluations of the economic, environmental, public health and climate costs and benefits of aviation and port operations
- Develop sustainable demand management plans which address regional air travel demand over time in low-to-no growth scenarios while minimizing environmental and public health impacts
- Repair community relationships that have been harmed by decades of disregard for residents and the greater Boston community. Strategize and implement large-scale reparations for residents.
- Develop policy and mitigation strategies which evaluate, assess, and reduce net ground access, and aviation noise and pollution impacts in all airport capacity growth scenarios, specifically by:
  - Development of mitigation implementation strategies which link progressive mitigation with growth in impacts
  - Prioritizing public safety by removing harmful aviation pollutants from indoor environments (including schools and homes) in high aviation pollution exposure zones
  - Increasing high occupancy vehicle access modes to Logan
  - Eliminating idling at all Massport facilities
  - Reducing noise impacts through completing the legally required runway use planning

### Qualifications, Skills and Experience:

A Bachelor's degree with coursework in urban planning, public health, business administration

and cross-sector partnership is required. In addition, experience managing challenging organizational cultural change is desired. An educational or professional background in environmental mitigation is required. A demonstrated track record of successfully working with and advocating for minoritized and environmental justice communities is a requirement to be considered.

Experience in aviation and transportation is not an absolute requirement for consideration. Understanding the nuances and distinctions between Authority, FAA, airline, and airport priorities is critical to success in this role. Having experience in business, governmental, environmental, and public policy is a plus. Having a passion for innovation and social accountability is critical.

Applications from qualified individuals with bilingual Spanish, Arabic, or Mandarin language skills, and/or who are representative of local under-resourced communities will be prioritized.

In addition, the successful candidate will possess:

Critical thinking and 'outside the box' problem solving skills; integrity; emotional intelligence; glowing references from environmental justice organizations and community transportation advocates.

## Descripción del puesto de director general de Massport: Presentado por la Logan Community Clean Air Coalition

### Antecedentes:

La Massachusetts Port Authority ("Massport") fue creada por el poder legislativo en 1956 para estimular la economía, mediante la propiedad explotación del Puerto de Boston, el Aeropuerto Internacional de Logan y Hanscom Field. Massport recibió terrenos, dinero, autonomía política y el poder de expropiación para lograr este objetivo. Massport utiliza actualmente más de 2,384 acres en East Boston y la ciudad de Winthrop.

### Aeropuertos de Massport

Logan es el aeropuerto insignia de Massport y su centro de beneficios, con unos ingresos anuales de 825 millones de dólares que cubren las pérdidas de Massport en Hanscom, el Puerto de Cruceros y las instalaciones portuarias y de contenedores de Boston. En la actualidad, Massport no utiliza sus ingresos para cubrir las pérdidas económicas relacionadas con la congestión del tráfico y los impactos medioambientales sobre la salud de los residentes locales. Dada la importancia económica de Logan, Massport ha promovido su expansión, en lugar de utilizar una solución multiaeropuerto, y Logan sirve actualmente al 78% del mercado aéreo de

Nueva Inglaterra. A pesar de su cuota de mercado dominante, Logan no tiene manera de expandirse más allá de sus límites actuales y está operando por encima de su capacidad de diseño, lo que provoca problemas de seguridad para los viajeros y frecuentes incursiones en las pistas.

A falta de legislación medioambiental que la obligue a rendir cuentas, la Massachusetts Port Authority ha rellenado 1,800 acres de marismas y ha arrasado con islas portuarias, barrios y un parque diseñado por Olmsted con el fin de expandir el aeropuerto, lo que ha provocado la indignación pública desde mediados de los años sesenta. Logan produce actualmente 810,000 toneladas de gases de efecto invernadero al año y más de 35,000 libras de contaminación atmosférica al día, lo que aumenta el asma infantil, la EPOC y otras morbilidades en las comunidades cercanas. Una mayor expansión de Logan requerirá probablemente la ampliación de los barrios circundantes y conllevará elevados costos políticos, de permisos y de relaciones públicas.

Los ingresos de Logan subvencionan el desarrollo de otros aeropuertos de Massport, ayudando a Hanscom a captar cuota de mercado para el servicio de jets privados, y también empujando la actividad allí más allá de la capacidad tolerable, impulsando la oposición pública. Massport ha invertido 100 millones de dólares para aumentar la capacidad del Aeropuerto Regional de Worcester, a pesar de su desventajosa ubicación y de las malas conexiones de acceso por tierra.

### El puerto y el puerto de cruceros

Boston, el principal puerto de EE.UU. hasta la década de 1840, ha descendido constantemente de categoría hasta ocupar el puesto 43 en tonelaje de carga en 2021. A pesar de este declive, Massport invirtió 850 millones de dólares en el dragado del puerto, destructor para el medio ambiente, y en grúas construidas en China (lo que más tarde suscitó preocupación por la ciberseguridad), uniéndose a docenas de puertos en Flynn Cruiseport Boston, que ocupa el puesto 28 en embarques de pasajeros en Norteamérica.

### Cargo y responsabilidades:

El CEO/Director(a) Ejecutivo

Dirigir la gestión de los negocios, las finanzas y el capital humano de Massport para garantizar que Massport opera de una manera fiscal y ambientalmente responsable a través del desarrollo de un plan estratégico que:

- Liderar un cambio de cultura organizativa para valorar la responsabilidad y la precisión, y reparar las relaciones con las partes interesadas de la comunidad.
- Realizar evaluaciones

See OP-ED Page 5

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

We often quote a verse from Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Ring Out Wild Bells" when we write our annual New Year's editorial.

But after re-reading the poem in its entirety, we are printing the whole thing, because it sums up -- better than we ever could express -- our feelings about 2023 and our hopes for 2024.

Although it was published in 1850, its verses are timeless. Indeed, one could apply every stanza to something going on in the world today.

So we hope you take the time to read it and enjoy it, as we did the other day:

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light;  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.  
Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.  
Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more,  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.  
Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.  
Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out thy mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.  
Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.  
Ring out old shapes of foul disease,  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.  
Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

We wish all of our readers a Happy and Healthy New Year.

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## Your opinions, please

The Times welcomes letters to the editor. Our mailing address is 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. Letters may also be e-mailed to [editor@eastietimes.com](mailto:editor@eastietimes.com).

Letters must be signed. We reserve the right to edit for length and content.

# EB Chamber announces the winners of their 2023 Deck the Windows Holiday Decorating Contest

Special to the Times

The East Boston Chamber of Commerce held their 2023 Deck the Windows holiday decorating contest. The Chamber's

President, Shirley Fabbo presented certificates and prizes to the three winners. Congratulations to:  
1st Prize winner – El Valle De La Sultana Market at 121 Bennington Street

2nd Prize winner – Taco Mex at Maverick Square  
3rd Prize winner – Mario Real Estate Century 21 at 620 Bennington Street

La Cámara de Comercio de East Boston celebró su concurso de decoración navideña Deck the Windows 2023. Se entregaron certificados y premios a

los tres ganadores.

Enhorabuena a:  
Ganador del primer premio: El Valle De La Sultana Market a 121 Bennington Street

Ganador del segundo premio: Taco Mex en Maverick Square  
Ganador del 3er premio - Mario Real Estate Century 21 a 620 Bennington Street



First Place winner, El Valle De La Sultana Market with members of Sultana staff.



Second Place winner, Taco Mex with Taco Mex staff.



Third Place winner, Century 21 Mario Real Estate Decorations by Maryann Zaluski.

## Op-Ed // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

precisas de los costes y beneficios económicos, medioambientales, de salud pública y climáticos de las operaciones aéreas y portuarias.

- Desarrollar planes sostenibles de gestión de la demanda que aborden la demanda regional de transporte aéreo a lo largo del tiempo en escenarios de crecimiento bajo o nulo, minimizando al mismo tiempo los impactos sobre el medio ambiente y la salud pública.

- Reparar las relaciones comunitarias que se han visto perjudicadas por dé-

cadadas de desprecio hacia los residentes y la comunidad de Boston. Elaborar estrategias y aplicar reparaciones a gran escala para los residentes.

- Desarrollar estrategias políticas y de mitigación que evalúen, valoren y reduzcan el acceso neto a tierra y los impactos del ruido y la contaminación de la aviación en todos los escenarios de crecimiento de la capacidad aeroportuaria, concretamente mediante:

- Desarrollo de estrategias de implementación de mitigación

que vinculen la mitigación progresiva con el crecimiento de los impactos.

- Dar prioridad a la seguridad pública eliminando los contaminantes nocivos de la aviación de los ambientes interiores (incluidas escuelas y hogares) en zonas de alta exposición a la contaminación de la aviación.

- Aumentar los modos de acceso de los vehículos de alta ocupación a Logan.

- Eliminación del ralentí en todas las instalaciones de Massport

- Reducir el impac-

to acústico completando la planificación del uso de las pistas exigida por ley.

### Cualificaciones, aptitudes y experiencia:

Se requiere una licenciatura en planificación urbana, salud pública, administración de empresas y colaboración intersectorial. Además, se valorará la experiencia en la gestión de cambios culturales organizativos que supongan un reto. Se requiere formación académica o profesional en mitigación medioambiental. Se requiere un historial demostrado de

trabajo con comunidades minoritarias y de justicia medioambiental y de defensa de las mismas.

La experiencia en aviación y transporte no es un requisito absoluto para ser considerado. Comprender los matices y distinciones entre las prioridades de la Autoridad, la FAA, las aerolíneas y los aeropuertos es fundamental para tener éxito en este puesto. Se valorará la experiencia en política empresarial, gubernamental, medioambiental y pública. Es fundamental tener pasión por la innovación y la respons-

abilidad social.

Se dará prioridad a las solicitudes de personas cualificadas con conocimientos bilingües de español, árabe o mandarín, y/o que representen a comunidades locales con escasos recursos.

### Además, el candidato seleccionado poseerá:

Capacidad de pensamiento crítico y de resolución de problemas "fuera de la caja"; integridad; inteligencia emocional; referencias brillantes



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### GOLDEN AGE CHRISTMAS PARTY AT SPINELLI'S IN DAY SQUARE

Derek Kouyoumjian Photos



Paul Battalia and Francis Stetts dance.

Golden Age held their Christmas party at Spinelli's in East Boston's Day Square. After a fantastic lunch, attendees danced, reminisced, celebrated the coming of Christmas and decades of friendship. Later they received some special guests as Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, Massachusetts State Rep Adrian Madaro, and former City Councilor Sal LaMattina joined the fun.



Friends gather for a photo amidst their Christmas celebrations.



Boston Mayor Michelle Wu sings "We Are Family" with Emcee Alan Labella and a room full of fans.



Buddy Mangini with Boston Mayor Michelle Wu and former City Councilor Sal LaMattina.



Massachusetts State Rep Adrian Madaro, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, and former City Councilor Sal LaMattina pose for photos with attendees of the Christmas party.



The party got going on the dance floor after lunch was served.



Boston Mayor Michelle Wu his the dance floor and joins the celebration.

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GOLDEN AGE CHRISTMAS PARTY AT SPINELLI'S IN DAY SQUARE



Boston Mayor Michelle Wu with Maria Mercurio, her sister Joanne Pascucci, and their mother Millie.



Boston Age Strong Commissioner Emily Shea, Rose Petraglia, Golden Age President Louise Lulu Montanino, Boston Police Officers Hugo Alvarez and Joe Cintolo, Joan Rutledge, and Fran Piantedosi.



Boston Police Officer Hugo Alvarez, former Boston City Councilor Sal LaMattina, Mayor Michelle Wu, Golden Age President Louise Lulu Montanino (2nd from right), Rose Petraglia, Joan Rutledge, and Fran Piantedosi.



Friends for over 60 years celebrate the Holidays and each other.



Josephine Euggiero and Buddy Mangini.



Long time friends and members of the Golden Age celebrate at their Christmas party at Spinelli's Day Square.



Maria Mercurio and Peter Colwell.



Boston Mayor Michelle Wu is warmly greeted by Camille Iacuzio and Marie Cheffro.



Golden Age President Louise Lulu Montanino (center) with Al Carrier and Pat Capogreen of Cargo Ventures. Cargo Ventures CEO Jake Citrin, who was unable to attend, paid for the party.

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# Edwards // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

er, starting off as young, black, women lawyers trying to figure out our careers in a Burger King on Huntington Ave., talking about service and taking risks.”

Campbell commended Edwards for prioritizing the diverse community. Campbell and Edwards have served the Boston City Council together, focusing on issues that protect the vulnerable.

“You cannot do the work of protecting the rights of citizens, consumers, or businesses if you don’t have great partners. She is aligned in spirit and values; and understands the challenges it can be to be a woman of color serving an elected roll in this moment in time,” Campbell described about her connection with Edwards. “She gets things done.”

This year, Campbell and Edwards have been striving to build affordable housing, provide evicted residents with access to legal representation, and ensure people have wealth-building opportunities in their neighborhoods. They protect reproductive rights, and push for gender-affirming care.

“It is significant, and it is amazing,” admired Campbell. “This is a beautiful thing and needs to be celebrated.”

First Lieutenant in the Massachusetts Army National Guard Lydia Edwards declared that she will lobby for gun reform, sustainable rent control, and civil rights for medical care.

“People are coming to Massachusetts, in many cases, to make sure that they are safer,” acknowledged Edwards. “We’re going to continue to make this a beacon of hope and

safety. That’s what we do at the State House.”

Edwards is pushing for limiting the prices charged for prescription drugs, and for opportunities that allow seniors to remain in their homes as they age.

“We fight for everyone to have the dignity of choice in options where they’re going to live. The baseline is that it is clean, affordable, inclusive, welcoming, and in a diverse neighborhood of income levels and racial backgrounds,” said Edwards, an East Boston resident. “This is the neighborhood I’d be honored to live in, love, work, and fight for.”



Attorney General Andrea Campbell and Senator Lydia Edwards.

According to Edwards, 40% of housing units in East Boston are owned by outside investors who continue to increase rent. Edwards was saddened by the statistic, which she believes is shameful and wrong.

“Yes, we want to grow and see people come here. East Boston is second to Ellis Island, where people come to the United States to become Americans; but we want to grow a community, not buildings,” said Edwards. “We need to fight to make sure that our Constitutional rights come to fruition. We have a lot of good things to do together.”



Senator Lydia Edwards with East Boston residents John Antonellis and Juan Contreras.



Senator Lydia Edwards speaking with East Boston resident Evelyn Jones.



Jessica Morris, Patrick Bench, of East Boston, Senator Lydia Edwards, and Alexi Nowokunski, Winthrop resident, of Benchmark Strategies.



Senator Lydia Edwards with Kathleen, Ricardo, and 1-year-old Rafa Patrón, of East Boston.



Senator Lydia Edwards speaking with supporters.



Senator Lydia Edwards and Mo Gillen, of Charlestown.



Agnieszka Rytch-Foster, East Boston resident, with Senator Lydia Edwards.



Senator Lydia Edwards with Winthrop supporters Alan Billing, Suzanne Leonard, and Councillor John Munson.



Attorney General Andrea Campbell describing the efforts and accomplishments of Senator Lydia Edwards.

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Winthrop residents Ed Cash and Councillor John Munson.



Senator Lydia Edwards, Lily Nagy Li, Attorney General Andrea Campbell, and Helen Ji Li, of East Boston.



Councillor Gigi Coletta praising Senator Lydia Edwards.



Attorney General Andrea Campbell proudly expressing the civil rights work that she and Senator Edwards fight for together.

## Healey proposes regulations to strengthen resilience from coastal and inland flooding

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) today issued draft regulations to strengthen wetlands and stormwater resilience by providing flood control and preventing storm damage to shorelines and infrastructure from the impacts of climate change. The proposed regulations will help protect areas vulnerable to sea-level rise and storm surge, promote nature-based solutions to flooding, streamline certain permitting processes, and use updated precipitation data to inform decision-making.

The regulations are proposed under the Wetlands Protection Act and the Massachusetts Public Waterfront Act. MassDEP will accept comments on the draft regulations until March 1, 2024.

“Data tells us that inland and coastal flooding are two of the biggest threats to Massachusetts. The storms we saw this summer showed us that there is no time to waste,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. “These updates strike a balance to preserve and protect development along our waterways. These changes also present Massachusetts with another opportunity to lead – we’re promoting the most cutting-edge nature-based solutions along our coastlines.”

“We cannot continue a ‘business-as-usual’ approach if we want to build more resilient communities,” said MassDEP Commissioner Bonnie Heiple. “With these regulations, we’ve integrated the latest science and green infrastructure techniques to mitigate climate change impacts and protect residents, municipalities, and businesses from costly rebuilding efforts. MassDEP is grateful for the engagement of stakeholders and agencies in developing this proposal and looks forward to continued feedback on these regulations.”

### Community Resilience

The proposed Wetlands regulations would protect the coastal floodplain, which hosts nearly \$55 billion in structures, of which about \$40 billion is residential, \$12 billion is industrial, and \$2.5 billion is commercial. Of the nearly 2.5 million people living within the 78 coastal communities in Massachusetts, approximately 55 percent live within Massachusetts-designated Environmental Justice Block Groups, representing communities of color, low-income populations,

and/or communities facing language barriers.

### Coastal and Inland Flooding Resilience

The proposed Wetlands regulations will promote resilience by creating performance standards to protect the natural buffering function of wetlands and floodplains and help prevent damage to both the natural and built environment. The standards will require elevation of new development in areas of the coastal floodplain where most storm damage occurs and minimize new development in the most vulnerable area of the coastal floodplain where waves are higher than three feet. The regulations encourage nature-based approaches to improve resilience, such as restoration of salt marshes, coastal dunes, and barrier beaches on the coast, as well as inland wetlands. Updated stormwater management standards will reduce stormwater pollution to water bodies throughout the state, helping to improve the water quality of our rivers and streams.

The regulations are designed to be flexible for homeowners and families. Single-family homes and housing development with four or fewer units are exempted from the stormwater requirements of the Wetlands regulations and new housing developments with five to nine units per lot must meet new standards only to the extent possible.

Updates to Waterways regulations – which protect and promote public use of tidelands and other waterways in Massachusetts and are commonly known as “Chapter 91” – require license applications to consider projected sea-level rise for certain projects and encourage relocation of building mechanical systems away from the ground floor.

### Incentives for Nature-Based Solutions

The Wetlands regulations promote Green Site Design, which uses natural solutions – like trees and buffer zones – to manage stormwater, instead of more expensive detention basins and other traditional infrastructure. By using nature to address stormwater runoff and pollution, developers will receive Green Site Design credits and will substantially reduce the need to build and maintain more costly stormwater management systems.

### Updated Precipitation Data

The proposed Wetlands amendments use up-to-

date data sources to evaluate precipitation – replacing the 1961 data that is currently used with 2019 data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Storms have been increasing in intensity with climate change so that today’s storms deliver more precipitation than they did 60 years ago. Using outdated data to design stormwater systems means pipes that are too small to carry increased volumes of water – resulting in overflows and flooding. The switch to data that are more reflective of current conditions will prevent resulting damage to buildings and bridges, scouring of riverbanks, and other problems.

### Streamlined Permitting

The proposed regulations streamline certain permitting processes. The Wetlands regulations are updated to align with the EPA Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System General Permit and the Transportation Separate Storm Sewer System Permit to improve consistency and protect surface waters, including wetlands, from stormwater runoff pollution. The Waterways regulations allow modifications to licenses for identified smaller structures (primarily small docks and piers) to account for sea-level rise and maintaining public water access.

### Regulatory Process

These regulatory updates are among the 142 priority actions for state agencies to direct under the ResilientMass Strategy released in November 2023. The Strategy was developed to address the impacts of climate change, such as flooding from precipitation, high heat, and coastal flooding and erosion. ResilientMass identified inland flooding as the most significant climate hazard in Massachusetts.

The proposed amendments were developed over several years in close consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including more than 10 sessions with stakeholder groups, more than 25 presentations, and meetings with various groups and interested parties.

MassDEP is accepting public comment on the draft regulations until 5 p.m. on Friday, March 1, 2024. Virtual information sessions and public hearings on both sets of regulations will be held throughout January and February; more details are available here. For more information on the Wetlands Regulations, turn here. For

more information on the Waterways Regulations, turn here.

### Validators:

“The Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) is pleased that MassDEP is publishing important updates to the Wetlands Protection Act,” said MACC Executive Director Dorothy A. McGlinchy. “These proposed regulations, along with the climate related goals established by the Healey-Driscoll Administration, will help minimize impacts from severe storms in a changing climate. Additional urgency and coordination will be needed in our continued fight to preserve wetlands, open space, and biological diversity. MACC supports the Conservation Commissioners who are on the front lines of protecting our precious resource areas.”

“The urgency of these regulations is underscored by this week’s major rainstorm causing extreme flooding, power outages, damage to homes and businesses and most tragically, a death. How we manage water has profound implications on not only our environment, but also public health and safety,” said Charles River Watershed Association Executive Director Emily Norton. “We are pleased that these proposed regulations offer so many improvements in terms of updated precipitation models, stricter rules around building in floodplains, more consistency for developers and municipalities between state and federal rules, and more. We do not have the luxury of moving slowly when it comes to climate resilience, so kudos to MassDEP and the Healey-Driscoll Administration for acting now to protect our communities and natural spaces from the impacts of our changing climate.”

MassDEP’s mission is to protect and enhance the Commonwealth’s natural resources – air, water and land – to provide for the health, safety and welfare of all people, and to ensure a clean and safe environment for future generations. In carrying out this mission, MassDEP commits to address and advance environmental justice and equity for all people of the Commonwealth; to provide meaningful, inclusive opportunities for people to participate in agency decisions that affect their lives; and to ensure a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

## OBITUARIES

### Patricia Belanger

Dedicated educator



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Patricia (Diminico) Belanger a beloved wife, sister-in-law, aunt and dedicated educator. Patricia departed this world on December 18, 2023, leaving behind a legacy of love, kindness, and an unwavering commitment to education.

Born on May 9, 1943, Patricia was the daughter of Nicholas and Louise (Politano) Diminico. She grew up surrounded by the warmth of her family and her upbringing laid the foundation for the compassionate and caring person she became. Patricia entered into a lifelong partnership with Paul Belanger and together they shared decades of love, laughter and countless cherished memories.

Patricia was not only a devoted wife but also a beloved sister-in-law to Robert Belanger, Joey Belanger and Dorothy Belanger. Her extended family included numerous nieces and nephews who held a special place in her heart, and she, in turn, played an integral role in their lives.

Throughout her remarkable career, Patricia dedicated over 25 years to shaping the minds of young learners as a Boston Public School teacher. Her passion for education and her students shone brightly during her tenure at Dr.

Martin Luther King Jr. School. Patricia’s impact reached far beyond the classroom, as she inspired countless students to reach for the stars and believe in their dreams.

Patricia will be remembered for her unwavering commitment to her family, her boundless generosity, and her ability to find joy in the simplest moments of life. Her legacy lives on in the countless lives she touched through her teaching and the love she shared with those fortunate enough to know her.

Family and friends honored Patricia’s life by gathering at the Ruggiero Family Memorial Home, East Boston on Friday, December 22nd and again on Saturday, December 23rd before leaving in procession to St. Anthony’s Church for a Funeral Mass. Services concluded with Patricia being laid to rest at Puritan Lawn Memorial Park Cemetery in Peabody. To leave an online condolence visit [www.ruggieromh.com](http://www.ruggieromh.com).

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# Local talent headed to City Hall Plaza for New Year's Eve celebration

Special to the Times

First Night Boston is proud to announce its full schedule of performances for New Year's Eve, which will fill City Hall Plaza and surrounding venues in the hours leading up to 2024. Musicians, comedians, performers, and artists from near and far will perform across in Boston's downtown, with the stage, lights, and ice in City Hall Plaza serving as the event's centerpiece. The full schedule is included in this release.

Beginning at 11:11 a.m., artistic and musical performances kick-off at the Main Stage with Hyde Park-based Sweet Harmony. The Boston Sax-

ophone Quartet will begin indoor programming at Boston's City Hall's Civic Pavilion at 12:00 p.m. with its Noteworthy Scholars program, and arts and crafts presented by Greater Boston Chinese Cultural Association will fill the second floor of City Hall at 1:00 p.m. Arts and crafts include calligraphy for New Year's blessings, translating names into Chinese, face painting, and more.

On City Hall Plaza, the Main Stage rocks on with local acts Ava & Cam, Paco, Boston Music Project, and Tristan and Delaney blending new and old beats for the growing crowds. The Ice Sculpture Gallery, featuring iconic

Boston landmarks will be sparkling for all to enjoy.

The carousel on the Greenway offers free rides from 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., and at 2:00 p.m., Improv Asylum makes its First Night debut with the first of three afternoon shows at its Hanover Street location. The audience-interactive and lightning-fast improv is designed for the whole family and goes until 4:40 p.m. In the Back Bay, the breathtaking Organ Concert in the First Church of Christ Scientist also begins at 2:00 p.m.

The microphones rattle atop City Hall Plaza as the sun sets with performances from local artists including Koliba, Lizje, and Maddi

Ryan. Koliba is bound to turn heads by blending traditional and modern West African rhythms, reggae, ska, zouk and more. Colombian-American Lizje's captivating blend of Latin Jazz and pop music keeps the energy high while Maddi Ryan returns her talent to First Night for the third straight year.

Boston Mayor Michelle Wu will lead a speaking program at 5:45 p.m. before the First Night Parade brings hundreds of performers to Boston Common for the 7:00 p.m. fireworks display. As the countdown continues, the tempo at City Hall picks up with Sons of Levin and LaQuandra Seymore performing short sets, before Guess Method, Nancia, and Ayla Brown & Rob Bellamy put their local roots and vibrant sounds on display.

Headliner Sammy Adams flexes some Boston muscle when he takes the stage at 11:30 p.m. As a second fireworks display glows above Boston Harbor at midnight, New England will ring in 2024 with Adams in the spotlight. Boston-born, the platinum-selling rapper, singer, and songwriter caps more than 13 hours of free entertainment, light shows, ice sculptures, and other family-friendly programming that is completely free for thousands of visitors.

More than 200,000 guests are expected to attend First Night Boston 2024. For more information and to support First Night with a donation, the public is invited to visit [www.firstnightboston.org](http://www.firstnightboston.org).

The full performance schedule is as follows, as of Dec. 19, and is subject to minor changes.)

Church of Christ Scientist  
250 Massachusetts Ave.  
**First Church of Christ, Scientist - The Mother Church Extension**  
11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.,  
11:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Enjoy free admission to the How Do You See the World? experience + Maparium globe, a tour of The Mother Church at 1 p.m., and visit the Christian Science Reading Room from 11:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

**First Night Organ Concert**  
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Soul-touching performances from organists upon one of the world's ten largest organs

City Hall Civic Pavilion  
1 City Hall Sq. (Entrance Congress St.)  
**Boston Saxophone Quartet**  
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
Performing with Bos-

ton-area students and rising saxophone stars, BSQ is an experienced quartet of talented instrumentalists

**The Lied To's**  
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
The Lied To's, made up of musicians Doug Kwarbler and Susan Levine will play soulful beats indoors at City Hall Plaza

City Hall Second Floor  
1 City Hall Sq. (Entrance near Congress St.)  
**Arts and Crafts Presented by Greater Boston Chinese Cultural Association**  
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Arts and crafts for all to enjoy with Greater Boston Chinese Cultural Association

Improv Asylum  
216 Hanover St.  
**Improv Asylum**  
2:00 p.m.- 4:40 p.m.  
Three back-to-back audience-interactive and lightning-fast improv shows for the whole family

Boston Common  
139 Tremont St.  
**Frog Pond Skating Spectacular**  
6:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.  
Figure skating show produced by The Skating Club of Boston  
**City of Boston Family Fireworks**  
7:00 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.  
A spectacular Fireworks display over the Boston Common

City Plaza Main Stage  
1 City Hall Sq.  
**Sweet Harmony**  
11:11 a.m. - 11:51 a.m.  
Performance and singing dance troupe from Hyde Park  
**Ava & Cam**  
12:10 p.m. - 12:40 p.m.  
Live music including Pop, Rock, and Country songs by this impressive duo

**Paco's Band**  
1:00 p.m. - 1:40 p.m.  
Paco and his band performing some of your favorite 50's and 60's hit oldies music

**Boston Music Project**  
2:00 p.m. - 2:40 p.m.  
Creative youth development program highlighting students unleashing their musical creativity  
**Tristan and Delaney**  
3:00 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.  
A performance by Mass-born Delaney and Alabama-born Tristan; two successful smalltown kids who are performing a glimpse into the past

**Koliba**  
4:00 p.m. - 4:40 p.m.  
Bringing together musicians from two continents, Koliba will perform a blend of traditional and modern styles including West African rhythms, Hi Life, Reggae, Ska, Zouk, and more

**LIZJE**  
5:00 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.  
Columbian/American artist drawing inspiration from her diverse cultural background, performing her unique and innovative sound that sets her apart  
**Maddi Ryan**  
6:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Performance by the up and coming singer/songwriter from just North of Boston

**Sons of Levin**  
7:20 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Inspired by classic rock bands, Sons of Levin sings homage to previous great rock and roll acts while delivering their own take on the jam/rock scene  
**LaQuandra Seymore**  
8:10 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.  
Performance by Massachusetts native singer and songwriter whose repertoire spans many genres and resonates with many ages.

**Guess Method**  
8:50 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.  
Dance-inducing Indie-Funk powerhouse by the group, hailing from the Boston area  
**Nancia**  
9:50 p.m. - 10:05 p.m.  
Performance by Boston's best R&B artist, including singing, dance, and energy

**Ayla Brown & Rob Bellamy**  
10:30 p.m. - 11:10 p.m.  
Massachusetts natives, and married couple will perform their own songs together  
**Sammy Adams**  
11:30 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.  
Event headliner performing by platinum selling rapper, singer, and songwriter

Boston Harbor (Long Warf)  
212 Northern Ave.  
**Boston Harbor Fireworks**  
12:00 a.m. - 12:20 a.m.  
Breathtaking fireworks display over the Boston Harbor, brought to you by Meet Boston.

First Night Boston is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization that funds the annual New Year's Eve celebration in the city of Boston. The city-wide celebration features family-friendly traditions such as a parade down to Boston Common; hand-crafted ice sculptures; performances from local musicians and artists, and of course, the highly anticipated "First Night Countdown" to the New Year, that kicks off the much-anticipated spectacular midnight fireworks display over Boston Harbor. Boston City Hall, and other locations will offer family-friendly entertainment options. All First Night Boston activities are free and open to the public. For more information and a list of events, visit [www.firstnightboston.org](http://www.firstnightboston.org).

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# Wu and PowerCorpsBOS celebrate graduation of third cohort

Special to the Times

Mayor Michelle Wu celebrated the graduation of PowerCorpsBOS' third cohort. PowerCorpsBOS is a green jobs program that creates workforce development opportunities for young adults, particularly from Boston's environmental justice communities, in fields that address pressing environmental challenges in Boston. The 29 graduates spent the past six months learning about various green industries and skill sets, including urban forestry and energy efficient building maintenance.

"PowerCorps is essential in our work to invest in our young people, expand opportunity and build a Green New Deal city," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "This program provides crucial pathways through skills and job training to our young people - ensuring that our green workforce is accessible to all. Congratulations and thank you to this year's empowering graduating class for their commitment to strengthening Boston's foundation for a clean, resilient future!"

Led by the Worker Empowerment Cabinet in partnership with the Environment Department, PowerCorpsBOS is a "learn and earn" program that pays Boston's young adults ages 18-30 to participate in hands-on training and provides

them with career readiness support, and connections to employers in the green industry. Priority populations for the program are marginalized groups, residents from environmental justice communities, as well as returning citizens, court-involved residents, youth who have experienced homelessness or housing instability, and youth who have been in foster care.

"I am incredibly proud of our Cohort 3 graduates for dedicating the last six months to improving themselves personally and professionally while serving their communities," said Davo Jefferson, Executive Director of PowerCorpsBOS. "It has been a privilege to witness first hand the positive impact PowerCorpsBOS has had in changing the trajectory

of the lives of Boston's young adults. Thank you to the employer and community partners who have made this work possible. Together, we will continue to provide our young people with these critical career pathways into the green industry."

"Being a Green New Deal city means we must move forward priorities that fall at the intersection of racial and economic justice— that open doors for our residents— to join us in the fight against climate change and the preservation of our green spaces," said Reverend Mariama White-Hammond, Chief of Environment, Energy and Open Space. "I am grateful to the PowerCorps graduates for dedicating themselves to learning these critical skills that will positively

impact our communities for years to come."

PowerCorpsBOS offers two training pathways in Urban Forestry (UF) and Building Operation Systems (BOS). The Building Operations track was created in partnership with Roxbury Community College (RCC) and A Better City (ABC). Twenty-three graduates completed the UF track which covers the planting, maintenance, care and protection of tree populations. These participants assisted 101 acres of public land, removed 197 bags of invasive material, worked with 18 service project partners, planted 52 trees, pruned 21 trees, underwent eight hours of tree climbing training and eight hours of chainsaw training, earned three college credits from UMass Mount Ida in Arboricul-

ture, and talked to 78 employees in the private and public industry.

Six graduates completed the BOS track which provided training for jobs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in large buildings by learning skills to maintain building operations at peak efficiency. The curriculum included topics ranging from conducting energy audits to maintaining electrical, HVAC, and plumbing systems. The participants earned several industry recognized certifications including a Building Operator Certification (BOC), Fundamentals in Energy Efficient Building Operations (FEEBO), Building Performance Institution (BPI) Certificate, and a Green Building Professional - Operations and Maintenance (GPRO) cer-

tificate.

"PowerCorps has been a life changer for me and led me on a path to a bright future," said PowerCorps graduate Ricky Bradley-White. "I have sharpened my skills and earned certifications that will help me secure a meaningful quality job. This experience was more than I have ever expected and was worth every moment. I highly recommend this program to anyone who lives in Boston and is looking for a career change."

"PowerCorps Boston has done so much for me throughout these past six months," said PowerCorps graduate Daquan Dixon. "Everything I have learned has been a tool to unlock my true potential. I got the opportunity to experience things I never could have imagined. The program has taught me that the tools are there; it's up to you to reach out and grab them."

PowerCorpsBOS plans to increase the program duration from six months to ten months to offer participants a more comprehensive and immersive experience and enhance the depth of the program's curriculum. The new schedule will align with the traditional college academic calendar and seeks to capitalize on peak hiring seasons in the green industry. Learn more about PowerCorpsBOS at [boston.gov/powercorps](http://boston.gov/powercorps).



The third graduating cohort of the PowerCorpsBOS program, a green jobs program focusing on workforce development opportunities.

## RMV provides update on implementation of Work and Family Mobility Act

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) is providing an update on the first six months of the Work and Family Mobility Act (WFMA). Since the law went into effect on July 1, 2023, the RMV has issued 91,961 new learner's permits and 54,952 new, first-time driver's licenses to Massachusetts residents.

"Since the Work and Family Mobility Act was implemented in July, thousands of Massachusetts residents have been able to get licenses helping provide access to friends, families, and their communities," said MassDOT Secretary and CEO Monica Tibbitts-Nutt. "We are especially proud of the language and interpreter assistance provided to applicants, underscoring our commitment to helping all eligible applicants. We'd also like to thank our non-profit and community partners for assisting the Registry with public education about the new law, which helped to enhanced customer service options."

"The RMV and its employees have worked hard to meet the challenge of increased demand for appointments and credentials under the Work and Family Mobility Act," said Registrar Colleen Ogilvie. "We are grateful for the support from advocates and community leaders throughout this process, and we are continuing to improve each step of our process."

The amount of new learner's permits represents an increase of 244 percent, and new driver's licenses represents an increase of 120 percent, when compared to the same time period in 2022. In addition, 33,648 out of state conversions were processed.

To accommodate increased customer volumes, the RMV hired more than 250 front line staff

and road test examiners. In addition, the RMV expanded service by extending hours Monday through Friday and offering appointments on Saturdays at many service center locations. The RMV opened additional road test locations in Holyoke, Revere, Cambridge, Franklin, Worcester, and Brockton, contracted temporary third-party providers to handle increased volume for those newly eligible to obtain a license, and contracted with a driving school company to offer tests at their business locations in West Boylston, Avon, and Framingham.

Over the past several months, the RMV has identified and created informational resources specifically to help guide new customers as they begin the process to secure a Standard License. To further support this effort, the RMV has also worked directly with immigration advocacy groups, non-profit organizations, and impacted communities to facilitate and coordinate public outreach and to solicit feedback on implementation efforts so that best practices can be adopted.

"As leaders of the Massachusetts organizations that co-chaired the Driving Families Forward coalition, we are proud that we were able to successfully fulfill our mission to pass the Work and Family Mobility Act and see it through to full implementation this summer, thanks in no small part to the active collaboration we received from the Registry of Motor Vehicles and the entire Healey-Driscoll Administration," said Lenita Reason, Executive Director of The Brazilian Worker Center; Roxana Rivera, Assistant to the President of 32BJ SEIU. "Of course, the biggest obstacle that many Massachusetts residents once faced in get-

ting a driver's license was the longstanding linkage of driving privileges to immigration status. We were deeply pleased that our governmental partners went beyond our expectations in their openness, availability and willingness to quickly address issues around the successful implementation of the new law that has removed that obstacle, so that our roads can be safer for everyone."

"We are thrilled to see the real-life results of years of advocacy and perseverance. We thank the Healey-Driscoll Administration and the Registry of Motor Vehicles for their partnership in the rollout of the law - listening to community feedback, expanding access, and establishing best practices so all people can drive safely," said Laura Róto, field director, ACLU of Massachusetts. "There is nothing like the smile on the face of a person who has just passed their road test to remind us why this work is so important. We look forward to continuing to support the implementation of this law with robust regulations and processes."

The RMV also offers a pre-registering system that establishes a proactive process for booking appointments. Rather than checking the RMV website for an appointment, customers will be able to request an appointment online, and will receive an email with a unique link when an appointment is available for them to schedule.

The RMV remains committed to providing quality services to all communities and has been working diligently to develop informational resources, which include:

- An informational website with helpful information on the WFMA, details identification requirements and outlines steps which must be undertaken

by eligible individuals to get a Standard Class D or Class M driver's license, including successfully passing a vision screening, and scheduling separate appointments for a learner's permit and road test. This site was launched in

2023 because the Registry is committed to supporting the needs of newly eligible applicants.

- A special informational phoneline, 857-368-WFMA (857-368-9362), to hear messaging in multiple languages.

- Frequently Asked Questions and a public flyer for customers as they prepare their applications.

For more information go to [Mass.gov/WFMA](http://Mass.gov/WFMA) or call (857) 368-WFMA (857-368-9326).

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# EAST BOSTON CENTRAL CATHOLIC CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Photos by Marianne Salza

East Boston Central Catholic School (EB-CCS) presented "Twas the Night Before Christmas," a winter concert that honored the "Christ" in "Christmas," on December 15. Cherubs, cozy in pajamas, huddled around librarian, Mrs. Casaletto, for a reading of the clas-

sic, Victorian poem by Clement C. Moore. Little ones prepared for Santa's arrival, passing along a giant glass of milk, a cookie, and a carrot. Girls dressed boys like snowmen, with oversized coats, top hats, and scarves. The audience was also transported to Hawaii, where students hula danced and strummed on cardboard ukuleles.



First graders, Isabel Diaz, Lydia Vicino, and Beatriz Oliveira, performing, "Melekalikimaka."



Second graders, Lucas Betancur, Kevin DelCid, and Mariangel Velez performing "12 Days of Christmas."



East Boston Central Catholic School students singing, "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."



Eighth graders, Danielle Lopez, as Mary, and Luisantonio Rivero, as Joseph, in a nativity performance to "O Holy Night."



Angels, Cherubs, and K2 singing, "Santa Claus is Coming to Town."



Grade 3 singing "Rocking Around the Christmas Tree."



Claire McCleney and William Boczkowski, third grade, dancing to "Rocking Around the Christmas Tree."



Three Kings: Thomas Rozzi, Diego Garcia, and Carlos Hincapie.



Michael Rozzi, Samantha Rosa, Aurora Placeres, and Megan Upegui.



K2, Penelope Gonzalez, Maya Orozco dressing Joseph Baglio as a snowman, Lia Argueta, Violet Teazis, and Zayden Rubiera, performing, "Do You Want to Build a Snowman."

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Kalle Gaglione, Saya Ventura, and Gabriela Maldonado singing in the finale.



Samantha Villaquiran Rios, grade 2.

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