



**Mayor's Office of
Black Male Advancement**

Quarterly Report

January 1, 2024 - March 31, 2024

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Overview



The Office of Black Male Advancement's mission, priorities, focus areas, reports, resources, and programs, and the Black Men & Boys Commission



OVERVIEW

OUR MISSION

The Office of Black Male Advancement strives to improve outcomes and reduce systemic barriers to advancement for Black men and boys living in Boston. Our office works to empower Black men and boys. We want to ensure they have equitable access to opportunities in the City. As part of our work, we focus on policies, programs, resources, and local and national partnerships.

Our goal is to ensure Black men and boys have support to thrive and share in our City's prosperity.

OUR PRIORITIES

Economic
Opportunity &
Workers
Empowerment

Education &
Youth
Advancement

Affordable
Housing &
Pathways to
Homeownership

Public Health
and Wellness &
Fatherhood and
Families

Equity and
Racial Justice

Community
Safety &
Returning
Citizens

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- Boston has approximately 90,000 Black male residents.
- 25% of Black males are children under 18.
- Black male residents are represented in every neighborhood in Boston, with a higher concentration residing in Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan and Hyde Park.
- The countries with the largest number of foreign-born Black males are Haiti, Jamaica, & Cabo Verde.



OVERVIEW

OUR FOCUS

- Facilitate Black Men and Boys Commission meetings.
- Publicize report on Status of Black Men and Boys in Boston.
- Assist Black male constituents in accessing programs, services & critical information.
- Connect Black male-serving organizations to resources to better serve their constituents.
- Publicize critical resources to the Black male community.
- Support city, state, and federal governments, community based organizations and private sector to more equitably serve our Black male residents.
- Educate Boston residents on the Black Men and Boys Commission and Black Male Advancement programs.
- Monitor and advise city agencies and departments on issues pertaining to Black men and boys
- Design projects and programs that promote equity for Black men and boys which are not currently being implemented by existing city agencies.
- Perform outreach, communication, and liaison to Black men and boys related to community groups and organizations.
- Coordinate dialogues and action on behalf of city government to issues of concern to Black men and boys and related organizations.



Overview

OUR REPORTS AND RESOURCES

[**BMA Report: Recommendations for Action:**](#) Professor Emeritus James Jennings outlines twenty action steps for the Commission of Black Men & Boys and the Office of Black Male Advancement

[**The State of Black Males in Boston:**](#) This is a comprehensive report created by the Office of Black Male Advancement (BMA) in partnership with Boston Planning and Development Agency's (BPDA) Research Division. Using data gathered from a number of different peer-reviewed sources, the report is meant to help guide the Office's efforts to adequately address the systemic barriers to the advancement of Black males in Boston.

[**BPDA Redlining in Boston:**](#) This report, created by BMA in partnership with BPDA Research Division, outlines redlining in Boston. Using data gathered from a number of different peer-reviewed sources, the report is meant to help guide the Office's efforts to adequately address the systemic barriers to the advancement of Black males in Boston.

[**Black Male Advancement Resource Guide:**](#) The BMA Resource Guide provides a centralized location for City of Boston services for Black men, boys and families.



OVERVIEW

OUR PROGRAMS

Black Men and Boys Commission: BMBC Subcommittees have each met with Economic Opportunity, Workers Empowerment, Boston Public Schools, Housing, Boston Planning and Development Agency, Office of Returning Citizens, Senior Advisor for Community Safety, Boston Public Health Commission and Human Service Cabinets. BMA will host regular working sessions with each Cabinet and invite Commission members to join on a quarterly basis.

My Brother's Keeper Boston: The MBK Alliance ensures a greater degree of access to resources (material and financial) that become available to communities that have fully completed the process. Additionally, full completion positions MBK Boston to be able to better build our national MBK Network with in-person convening options.

Project Opportunity is an initiative that creates equitable opportunities for Boston residents with CORIs. The program connects residents with free legal consultation for sealing or expunging records, has panel discussions to address challenges and solutions for residents with CORIs, connects residents with employment and training resources, connects residents with key resources for well-being, trains City departments to meet the needs of residents with CORIS. Through this initiative the office of Black Male Advancement created an all-inclusive/one-stop resource guide and webpage that includes all City of Boston-led quality-of-life improvement resources. In addition we hosted a CORI friendly job and resource fair in partnership with MassHire which included 35 employers and resources, resume review and support, job application assistance, digital business cards, and free headshots.

Community Empowerment Small Grants: BMA along with Mayor Michelle Wu awarded funding to community based organizations totaling \$500,000. These grants, ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000, aim to empower Black male-serving community-based organizations and amplify their impact in alignment with 7 core priorities (mentoring and out of school time, youth pathways, housing mobility, economic mobility & wealth building, workforce, fatherhood engagement, wellness). These grants will empower community organizations that serve Black men across Boston's neighborhoods to deepen their impact and bring successful programming to scale.



OVERVIEW

OUR PROGRAMS CONT.

[R.E.A.C.H. 1000](#): BMA is working in partnership with BPS to connect young people with a network of individuals and organizations that serve as mentors. To support the first iteration of this program, BMA is looking to recruit 1,000 adult mentors over the next two years to connect with participating BPS students. As part of R.E.A.C.H. 1000, schools and mentees will have access to the following programs and learning opportunities: Black studies through dual enrollment; financial literacy; reading literacy, digital literacy; college and career pathways; and Generational Talent Small Grant. Mentees will also have an opportunity to engage with an Opportunity Lab, tailored for BPS Black seniors. The Lab will offer expert level technical support to scholars with their post secondary level plans, including higher education and careers.

[Capacity Building & Impact Institute](#): This initiative will allow CBOs servicing the Black Male Community in Boston, to receive 1 on 1 coaching, nonprofit training courses, expert tools, & resources to help raise funds, maximize impact, and build capacity. The pilot cohort will consist of CBO'S with proven or promising programs that share our core values and are highly aligned with our strategies, goals and approaches to deepen their impact or bring their work to scale.



Black Men & Boys Commission

The Commission was established through a 2021 ordinance and is made up of 21-Black males with experience, knowledge and expertise on issues pertaining to Black men and boys in the City of Boston. The Commission serves as an advisory board for the Mayor's Office of Black Male Advancement, including determining budget and policy priorities.

The Commission seeks to study the social conditions of the city's Black men and boys, develop strategies to remedy or assist in remedying serious adversities, and make recommendations to create equal opportunity for education, employment, access to public accommodations, and fair housing, significantly improving the life trajectory, physical, mental, economic and emotional wellness of generations of Black men and boys in the City of Boston.

Recent Commission Meetings

- Community Listening Sessions
- Monthly Commission Meetings
- Bi-monthly Subcommittee Meetings
- Affordable Housing and Pathways to Homeownership Subcommittee meeting (MOH & BPDA)
- Economic Opportunity & Worker's Empowerment Subcommittee meeting (OEIO & OWE)
- Education and Youth Advancement Subcommittee meeting (BPS & OYEA)
- Public Health & Wellness and Fatherhood and Families Subcommittee meeting (BPHC)
- Community Safety & Returning Citizens Subcommittee meeting (OHS, OCS, OR)

Commission Members

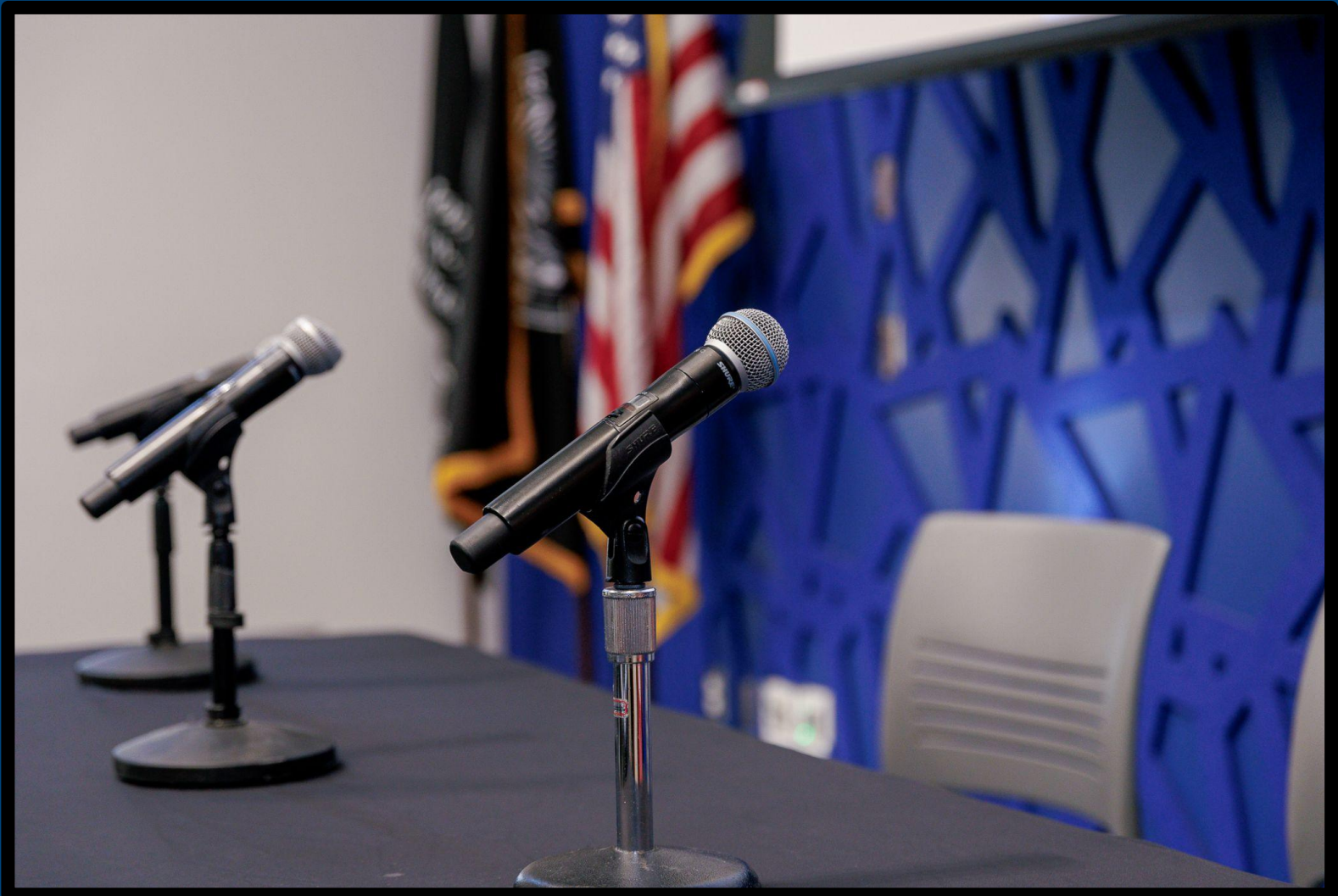
Tito Jackson, <i>Chair</i>	Louis Elisa	Joseph Feaster Jr.	Kurt Faustin	Darien Johnson
James Mackey, <i>Vice Chair</i>	Jeff Similien	Abdullah Beckett	Tony Richards	Imari Paris Jeffries
Matt Parker, <i>Vice Chair</i>	James Hills	Tony Brewer	Andre Barbour	Charlie Titus
Devin Morris	Kurt Faustin	Piter Brandao	Richard Harris	Brian Worrell, <i>ex-officio</i>



Policy Advocacy



Several policy changes, as a result of the Office of Black Male Advancement's advocacy, as well as budget proposals to the City Council for FY25.



Recent Policy Change

Black Male Advancement Supported Policy Changes

- [Boston Public Schools Offering AP African American Studies in 10 High Schools](#): Advanced Placement (AP) African American Studies is being offered at 10 high schools in the 2023-24 school year. Boston Public Schools (BPS) will provide the opportunity for students to read culturally affirming texts, and engage in discourse about Black history, culture, and the extraordinary contributions and accurate stories that have long been neglected and marginalized.
- [Equitable Literacy in BPS](#): Equitable Literacy Instruction is a commitment by BPS to enacting research-based literacy/bi-literacy practices that provide all students, especially those who have been historically underserved, to fully realize their brilliance and become readers and creators of powerful text.
- [Newly Signed Contracts with AFSCME Council 93 and SEIU Local 888](#): The contracts showcase a first for the City of Boston by including set dollar amounts in the wage increases instead of exclusively relying on percentage increases. The unions represent workers in departments including Public Works, Parks and Recreation, the Inspectional Services Department, the Boston Centers for Youth & Families, the Registry, Elections, among others.
- [\\$21 Million to Support Behavioral Health Services, Programming for Youth and Families](#): The investments are part of the City's response to the urgent need for more mental health supports for young people and to develop a larger and more diverse behavioral health workforce. These investments over five years will serve more than 50,000 students, directly impact 21 BPS schools, support more than 600 people in pursuing behavioral health careers in Boston, grow and diversify BPS mental health staff, and provide more than 1,000 people with behavioral health training to better serve youth and families in Boston.
- [The Mayor's Youth Sports Grant](#): will distribute up to \$80,000 to non-profit organizations aiming to eliminate barriers of entry for student athletes. The goal of the grant is to improve access to youth sports for Boston Public School (BPS) students and provide fiscal support to non-profit organizations to enhance sports programming. The grant announcement builds on ongoing efforts to increase youth sports participation in Boston. The City recently hired a Youth Sports Initiative Manager and a Recreation Program Manager to help make athletic opportunities more easily accessible for all Boston's families.
- [Colon Cancer Screening in Communities of Color](#): Because colon cancer screening can help catch cancer early when it's most treatable, the Boston Public Health Commission and the Colon Cancer Coalition launched a multilingual campaign to encourage early screening, especially in Black and Latinx communities. The campaign began this March during Colon Cancer Awareness Month and includes messages in English, Haitian Creole, and Spanish.



Black Men & Boys Commission's Budget Recommendations

Based on community listening sessions, monthly Commission meetings, [previously shared 2023-2024 policy recommendations](#), working sessions with various city agencies, and meetings with Mayor Michelle Wu, the Black Men and Boys Commission recommended the following FY25 budget proposals to address systemic barriers and improve outcomes for Black men and boys in Boston.

The Commission requested new investments for the Office of Black Male Advancement for an equity study, data collection, data dashboards, and monitoring and transparency across City of Boston departments.

The proposed [FY25 budget recommendations](#) totaling **\$9.1 million** focus on key themes that contribute to the city's overall well-being, crafted by the five subcommittees of the Commission:

- Economic Opportunity and Workers empowerment
- Affordable Housing and Pathways to Homeownership
- Public Health and Wellness and Fatherhood and Families
- Education and Youth Advancement
- Community Safety and Returning Citizens

“Our budget recommendations are informed and guided by meetings with the community, members of the Mayor's Cabinet, and specific stakeholders in this work. In collaboration with the Office of BMA, we look forward to seeing the budget priorities we have highlighted fully supported and integrated into this year's City of Boston Budget.”

-Tito Jackson, Chair of the Black Men & Boys Commission



Office of BMA Initiatives



The BMA team planned and executed several initiatives, convenings, and events throughout Q1, highlighted by our Inaugural Empowerment Summit, Hiring Day, Community Empowerment Grant Announcement, and MBK Student Tour of City Hall. In ensuring that we are connected with our Boston neighborhoods, we also provided support to over a dozen community gatherings.



Project Opportunity Hiring Day

The primary focus of the BMA Hiring Fair was to provide **application support** for individuals interested in City of Boston job opportunities. This aligns with our larger vision of being committed to ensuring equitable access for Black men and boys to opportunities in the City of Boston (COB). We specifically concentrate on offering

- assistance with applications
- LinkedIn profile creation
- digital business cards,
- resume building for individuals attending our event.



By the numbers:

Over **200 attendees** showed up to our Project Opportunity Hiring Day. While our office centers Black men, we also served a diverse group of all racial backgrounds, women, and immigrants across demographics.

With over **20 COB Departments** participating, qualified attendees were not only able to be interviewed, but many also learned the basic of digital skills (ie creating gmail accounts and uploading resumes) so that they have access to apply for future COB positions.

The Office of BMA Empowerment Summit

The Mayor's Office of Black Male Advancement hosted their Inaugural Empowerment Summit 2024 on March 1st at the John D. O'Bryant African American Institute. With over **200 attendees** (in-person and virtual), the summit began with a Fireside Chat between **Mayor Michelle Wu** and Executive Director **Frank Farrow**, moderated by **NBC10 News Anchor Glenn Jones**.

The summit featured distinguished speakers and panelists, including an address by **US Congresswoman Frederica Wilson**, Chair of the U.S Commission on Social Status of Black Men and Boys, as well as **Dr. Adren Wilson, Executive Director of My Brother's Keeper Alliance**. Panel discussions included:

- Pathways to Generational Wealth
- Closing Opportunity and Achievement Gaps for Black Boys
- Beyond Employment: Empowerment through Economic Opportunity and Workforce Development
- Buy the Block: Navigating Homeownership and Development



Community Empowerment Grant Announcement

Mayor Michelle Wu and the Office of Black Male Advancement announced the awardees for the 2024 Community Empowerment Grants. These grants are a **\$500,000** investment aimed at supporting community-based organizations that are focused on empowering and improving outcomes for Black men and boys in Boston. These grants will help **sixty-three organizations** scale up their work and deepen their impact throughout the city's neighborhoods.

The BMA Community Empowerment Grants prioritized organizations that expand one of the following seven focus areas:

- Mentoring and Out-of-School Time
- Youth and Young Adult Pathways
- Housing Mobility
- Economic Inclusion and Wealth Building
- Workforce Training and Development
- Fatherhood Engagement
- Mental Health and Wellness

[Grant Announcement & List of Awardees](#)

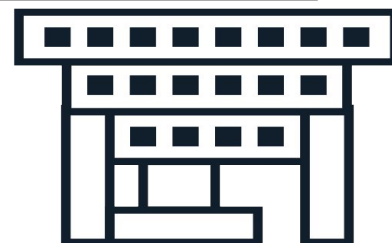
“These grants will support critical organizations in scaling up their programming and deepening impact across all of Boston’s neighborhoods. I’m grateful to the Office of Black Male Advancement for their work to build a stronger network for Black men and boys in our city.” –*Mayor Michelle Wu*



MBK Student Tour of City Hall

In February, Black Male Advancement **visited 10 Boston Public Schools** across Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan to read to K-2 students and engage with middle and high School students. BMA visited the: Maurice J. Tobin K-8, Henry L. Higginson School, Mattahunt School, Trotter Elementary School, Tech Boston Academy, Henderson K-12 Inclusion Schools, Excel High School, BCLA/McCormack High School, Jeremiah E. Burke High School, and Madison Park Vocational.

BMA invited visited schools to participate in a field trip taking a **tour of City Hall**. Highlights included **over 100 students** visiting the Mayor's Office, the Eagle Room, the Transportation Department traffic room, the Equity and Inclusion Cabinet, the Black Male Advancement Office, the Economic Opportunity and Inclusion Cabinet, witnessing a City Council hearing, and seeing the Planning Department's model of the City of Boston. The Charlestown, New Mission, and Cathedral high school state basketball champions provided words of inspiration to Mattahunt School and Neighborhood House Charter School students.



Other Supported Events

January

- **NBC10 Boston:** The Office of BMA met with News Anchor Glenn Jones, as well as other reporters, to discuss possible collaborations. Following the meeting, Jones gave the BMA team a tour of the studios
- **State of the City:** Along with other City of Boston officials and the Equity and Inclusion cabinet, the BMA team attended Mayor Wu's second State of the City Address
- **January Commission Meeting** to discuss the newly release "Recommendations for Action" Report by Professor James Jennings

February

- **Gender & Race in the Workplace** with Office of Women Advancement
- **Black History Month Events:** Flag Raising for Black History Month, The Melanin Roll at Chez Vous Roller Skating Rink, African-American Ball at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boys to Men: Youth Empowerment Seminar
- **BMA Early Literacy:** Maurice J. Tobin K-8, Henry L. Higginson School, Mattahunt School, Trotter Elementary School
- **BMA in High Schools:** Tech Boston Academy, Henderson K-12 Inclusion Schools, Excel High School, BCLA/McCormack High School, Jeremiah E. Burke High School, Madison Park Vocational
- **No Books, No Ball:** BMA staff read to children participating in NBNB program, which includes reading comprehension before a game of basketball.
- **West End House:** Community is Common-Unity Day with BPS Students
- **BPS Comic Con Literacy Program:** through REACH 1000 Mentoring
- **February Commission Meeting** in Roxbury to discuss the commission's budget proposal to the City Council for FY25

March

- **Young Man with a Plan:** career night in which the Office of BMA discussed resources available. Also attended the organization's open house
- **The Boardroom:** A career readiness initiative in partnership with BPS Division of Student Support Services and TD Bank
- **Gov. Healey Announces** a pardon of cannabis possession misdemeanor convictions
- **WCVB-Channel 5:** The Office of BMA met with 5 Investigates Reporter Karen Anderson to discuss possible collaborations. Following the meeting, Anderson gave the BMA team a tour of the studios
- **Massachusetts Workforce Agenda:** incorporates equity, competitiveness, and affordability to attract, retain, and develop a skilled workforce
- **Youth Job Fair:** job opportunities, career development, and live performances
- **BPS Win-the-Day Attendance Campaign** to address chronic absenteeism
- **March Commission Meeting** virtually to discuss priorities for upcoming year

NEXT QUARTER PREVIEW

- My Brother's Keeper Boston HBCU College Tour
- Black Men and Boys Commission June Meeting
- Project Opportunity CORI and Resource Fair
- Black Men and Mental Health Symposium at Harvard University
- My Brother's Keeper Boston Youth Summit
- My Brother's Keeper Boston UMASS Boston Fellow Cohort Graduation
- Juneteenth Celebration
- Black Fathers Brunch and Community Empowerment Celebration
- City of Boston Black Male Employee Group Mixer
- Community Empowerment Grant Networking Mixer



OUR TEAM



Frank Farrow

Executive
Director



Maddrey Goode

Chief of Staff



Donte Peeples

Community
Engagement
Manager



Jeysaun Gant

My Brother's
Keeper Program
Manager



Elijah Richards

Resource
Development
Manager



Branden Miles

Policy and
Research
Manager



Skip Gonsalves

Black Men's
Initiative
Program
Manager



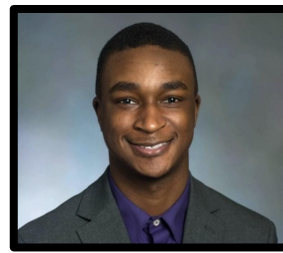
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