

• **COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT** •

Lynn Fire – A Collaborative Effort from Lynn Nonprofit Groups



On New Year’s Day, a 5-alarm fire on West Baltimore St. in Lynn, MA made 64 people instantly homeless with nothing but the clothes on their backs. The call for donations went out and the Greater Lynn community responded with such robust compassion that all of us here at Centerboard were overwhelmed with gratitude and emotion.



We all know times are tough out there for everyone. We also know that when the chips are down, communities come together to support one another. Centerboard led the effort along with Lynn Museum/LynnArts, the Lynn Shelter Association, Lynn Economic Opportunity, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, St. Vincent de Paul Society, and the Salvation Army to gather all manner of things the fire victims would need in the

cold of January. Clothing, house wares, coats, mittens, hats, toiletries, diapers etc. filled our entire 4,000 square foot engagement center. Additionally, countless people showed up to volunteer to sort, organize and offer their kind words in the face of such a sad neighborhood tragedy.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and volunteers, we send our heartfelt thanks to everyone who selflessly gave of their time, possessions

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Centerboard

Empowering Families, Young People and Communities for Success!

Centerboard is a community-based organization that supports families and young people through housing, access to employment and education, and financial empowerment. We work with parents and teens to achieve independence by providing trauma informed care and case management. In addition, we work with local residents, businesses, and elected officials to increase economic opportunity in the community. Through these efforts, we serve over 1,500 people each year.

centerboard.org

A View from the Top



Over the past eighteen years at **Centerboard**, I have experienced first-hand the strengths of our organization and the commitment and dedication of our staff. We have grown from a small 20 employee organization to an ever changing and strengthening organization of over 150 employees.

I am always impressed in our staff and their dedication to ensuring families and youth receive the best in services all while being treated as part of the team. Our culture as an organization is probably one of the most unique aspects of who we are. From our commitment to a strengths based approach and trauma focused service delivery, to our dedication to embracing difference and our strong relationships with each other, we have created a team that works together to make a positive impact on the youth and families we serve.

I want to thank the team for their hard work and achievements. In 2016, we saw a significant increase in our shelter program, both in size and geography, grew in our youth services and continued to expand the services offered through our Family Resource Center. This growth comes with challenges but is also comes with new energy as we have expanded and welcomed new staff in to the Centerboard family.

Over the years we have had many families and youth come back and share how their time with us positively impacted their life.

In order to continue to provide great service delivery, it's important that all employees understand the importance of their role in the organization, and that they feel connected. It is my job to make sure our employees understand their importance to us as a whole and that together we can make a difference in the communities we serve.

Often times, the impact we have on families and youth is not realized until long after they leave our programs. However, having been a part of this organization for as long as I have, I am fortunate to have seen the results of our involvement. Over the years we have had many families and youth come back and share how their time with us positively impacted their life. They often donate to us, volunteer for us or even work for us. Seeing the impact ensures we stay inspired to continue to provide good work.

Other times, we are able to see the impact of our efforts while the families or youth are still in our programs. In fact, during our recent clothing distribution two young men from our group home came and gave their time and energy to support others in need. Watching these two young men interact with their community in a helpful, engaging and positive way was an inspiration. It is through these types of interactions we begin to see how our actions can bring an even greater impact to the surrounding community.

As we move in to 2017 our efforts will continue to be focused on identifying innovative and effective ways to provide services for families and youth and applying our resources to optimize them. Our dedication to our families and youth, our willingness to embrace innovation and our commitment to making a difference are the foundation of Centerboard's work with our families. Put all of this together and our mission is relatively easy to see; to revitalize communities by investing in their people and places.

Our Board of Directors, staff and other stakeholders are as optimistic about Centerboard's future as I am. We are excited to continue executing our vision and expanding our community impact and I am confident that our leadership teams have developed the people, strategy and dedication to get there.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather Hildebrand".

Heather Hildebrand, Chief Operating Officer

• RESOURCE CENTER SPOTLIGHT •

Martina Smith ~ Assistant Program Director, Family Resource Center



Massachusetts Family Resource Centers (FRCs) are a statewide network of community-based providers offering multi-cultural parenting programs, support groups, early childhood services, information and referral resources and education for families whose children range in age from birth to 18 years of age. The goal is to support families to strengthen their bonds, connect to others, and engage in their community.

Our Lynn Family Forward Resource Center is a family friendly community based collaborative with the capacity to provide on-site access to comprehensive prevention and treatment services. The FRC provides social, educational, health and supportive services for all families including birth, blended, kinship, adoptive and foster families.

Martina Smith is the Assistant Program Director for Centerboard's Family Forward Resource Center (FRC). We spoke to her recently about her role here at the agency.

How did you arrive at Centerboard?

I've had a long journey to get here actually. I applied for a position before the organization changed its name from SPIN to Centerboard back in 2009. It didn't work out but I've always heard great things about Centerboard and really wanted to work here. When the FRC opening came up, I applied right away and fortunately, got the job. Working here has been a tremendous opportunity for me. Not only am I furthering my education, I also get to contribute in ways that go beyond my job title. I feel accepted, encouraged and supported and I couldn't ask for a better work situation.



Can you describe the impact of the FRC?

I think the biggest thing is just listening to the families, hearing them and meeting them where they're at. Most of the time, we provide them with the information that they need, give them lots of support and encouragement and they do the rest. The families are not "just a number" to us. We care about them and their success. The best part of my day is when a family member tells me "you've helped me tremendously."

Sum up Centerboard in one word.

Family. The staff here really cares for each other and in turn we all care about the families that come through. I've always wanted to be a part of helping people and my job at the FRC helps me accomplish that goal.

Family

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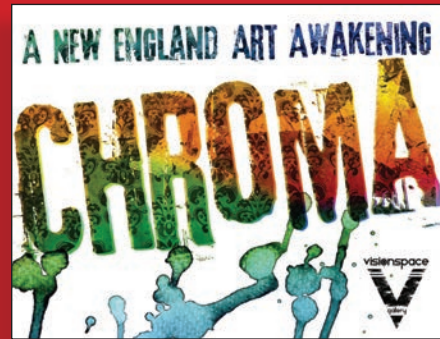
VISIONSPACE

GALLERY & CREATIVE VENUE

Since 2012, Visionspace Gallery has held 40 successful art openings, providing a platform for countless up and coming artists.

These free monthly events give our local community the chance to enjoy quality artwork while interacting with the artists. These events also contribute to the creative economy of downtown Lynn.

Stay up to date with Visionspace happenings by liking us at [facebook.com/VisionspaceGallery](https://www.facebook.com/VisionspaceGallery).



● **Visionspace Gallery**
16 City Hall Square
Lynn, MA 01901
(339) 883-1375
www.facebook.com/VisionspaceGallery

Artists ~ for submission information contact Carla Scheri at (339) 883-1375

• DONOR SPOTLIGHT •

Marblehead Interior Design Showroom to Support Centerboard



Diana James with Heather Hildebrand, Centerboard's Chief Operating Officer.



Members of the Marblehead Chamber of Commerce participate in the ribbon cutting to celebrate the grand opening of Living Swell.



Living Swell is located at 34C Atlantic Avenue, Marblehead MA.



Diana James, Founder and Principal Designer of East Coast Design has been tastefully and expertly designing Boston area and North Shore interiors for years. Through her use of breezy, funky, yet elegant style, Diana has warmed the homes of countless clients. So, when she began thinking about the next foray in her career, not only did she want to have a place to showcase her talents, but include those among us who aren't as fortunate a chance at brand new beginnings. Diana is a fantastic example of the type of supporters that Centerboard attracts – intelligent, forward-thinking, generous and most of all, involved in their community.

On Thursday, February 16th, Diana welcomed clients, guests and professional design associates to celebrate the grand opening of Living Swell her new retail gallery/showroom in Marblehead, complete with an exciting ribbon cutting ceremony performed by members of the Marblehead Chamber of Commerce.

During Diana's remarks, she announced her intent to support Centerboard's work helping homeless families and children by donating 10% of all sales at Living Swell during the months of February and March to Centerboard!

Centerboard's COO, Heather Hildebrand also welcomed and addressed attendees, engaging them with heartwarming stories of hope and success amongst Centerboard's client community during her tenure.

It was a fun, friendly and delicious event (catered by Chef Peter Capalbo of Wenham Tea House). All of us here at Centerboard send our best wishes to Diana and her team at Living Swell for a wealth of success!

Check out Diana's design website at www.eastcoastdesigninc.com, and Living Swell's website at www.livingswellmarblehead.com.

• YOUTH SERVICES SPOTLIGHT •

Travis Montross ~ Assistant Director, Lynn Teen Living Program



Travis Montross

Travis Montross is the Assistant Director of Centerboard's Lynn Teen Living Program. He grew up in North Carolina and worked at a non-profit serving at-risk youth for 11 years before relocating to Massachusetts with his wife.

How did you arrive at Centerboard?

After re-locating I started looking for work similar to what I had done in North Carolina. I found an opening at what was then Serving People In Need on craigslist and applied. I was hired on the 2nd shift of the STARR Program (Short Term Assessment and Rapid Reintegration Program), to reunite youth with their families. Then, I became a Day Program Coordinator, a Case Manager at the Independent Living Program and eventually moved over to my current position at the Teen Living Program.

Is there one particular success story that stands out from your work at Centerboard?

When I worked at STARR there was a resident who was a 14-year-old girl who had been adopted from the Ukraine. Her natural parents were unable to care for her and she lived in an orphanage until she came to the States. Unfortunately it didn't work out with her adoptive family either and she became a resident of the Group Home. She left to go into foster care and I didn't see her for several years. When she came back to reside at the Independent Living Program, I was able to build upon our previous relationship to help and support her as she signed up for classes and started looking for work. Now she is 21 and out on her own, successfully working and living in her own apartment.

Sum up Centerboard in one word.

Opportunity. It is something we provide to everyone we serve to help get them back on track. I've always wanted to make a difference and working at Centerboard allows me to do that.

Lynn Fire – A Collaborative Effort from Lynn Nonprofit Groups

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and dollars to help out our neighbors in need. This type of caring and generosity are why we at Centerboard are so thankful and proud to call Lynn home! As a result of the community's kindness, we were able to replenish many items for the families impacted by the fire. In addition to helping those families, we were also able to hold a Clothing Distribution Day for the general public. On January 21st, Centerboard Staff and volunteers from Greater Lynn came together at our Engagement Space and helped hundreds of families in need receive much needed clothing, coats and a helping hand.

When community works together, good things happen!



• HOUSING SERVICES SPOTLIGHT •

One Family's Long Journey



Lamadine, Fatima and their children with their Centerboard Family Advocate, Oriana.

Everyday at Centerboard our Family Advocates strive to help families overcome obstacles and pursue healthy, happy and successful lives. It is a true testament to the human spirit when we meet families that work hard to break through barriers, especially when faced with the challenges of starting over.

Lamadine and Fatima came from the Republic of Chad located in Northern Central Africa. They had been living at a Refugee Camp for about a year after fleeing their village when the Rebel Militia attacked and decimated their entire community.

In 2012 they came to the United States and were placed in a refugee shelter located here in the city of Lynn. They faced many obstacles in the shelter, ranging from cultural differences to overcrowded conditions. After many ups and downs, Lamadine found his way to Centerboard where he was connected with our Family Advocate, Oriana de la Rosa, who despite the language barrier was able to work together with the family.

The couple attended the New American Center where they started ESL classes and computer classes. Lamadine began working at Wal-Mart as a cashier and earned Wal-Mart's "Cashier of the Month" three times during his employment.

Oriana coached the family during the following months on how to save money and eventually Lamadine was able to buy his own car. Working with Oriana, the family then received a voucher from the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program which enabled Oriana to find them a great apartment in Lynn.

Lamadine has since been promoted to Wal-Mart's Loss/Prevention Department. Fatima has obtained her driver's permit and is now looking for work. Their landlord has spoken highly of the family, stating they pay their rent on time and are excellent tenants. Their children are thriving in daycare, where their oldest is learning three languages!

Success stories like Lamadine and Fatima's not only show the dedication of our Family Advocates, but the resilience of the human spirit. Lamadine and Fatima have gotten where they are through hard work and perseverance.

All they needed was a little help from "a neighbor"!



Empowering Families,
Young People
and Communities
for Success!

Become a Donor

Your thoughtful support provides much needed care: it assists families to obtain access to housing, employment and education, and financial empowerment services. Your gift helps further our work with local residents, businesses, and elected officials to increase economic opportunity. And more, it supports the growing arts and culture movement by helping Centerboard to continue spearheading public art projects and operating our non-profit art gallery, Visionspace.

Please consider partnering with Centerboard by including us in your philanthropic giving. Your support will help us forward our mission to support families, young people and the community we care about!

Centerboard is grateful to donors who wish to support its ongoing mission to revitalize communities by investing in their people and places. Many forms of charitable giving are appreciated and can be done online or by contacting Centerboard.

OUTRIGHT GIFTS

All gifts made to Centerboard are 100% tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. They include gifts of:

- Cash
- Check
- Credit Card
- Stock (avoid capital gains on appreciated security)



PLANNED GIFTS

Please contact your personal financial advisor and discuss your philanthropic intentions. Also please contact Centerboard so we may recognize your thoughtful generosity. Centerboard welcomes the following types of Planned Gifts that are 100% tax deductible to the fullest extent of US law:

- Bequests – Gifts through a WILL.
- Charitable Remainder Trusts – Pays beneficiaries an income for life; funded with cash, appreciated securities or real estate, and providing significant current tax benefits as well as reducing probate and estate costs for your heirs.

- Life Insurance – Existing or new policies can be a vehicle for providing a meaningful gift. Insurance can also be used to replace assets that have been earmarked for a charitable gift.
- IRAs or Individual Retirement Accounts – Current regulations allow the transfer of certain IRA assets to Centerboard.

For more information on Planned Gifts, contact Ray Pasciuto, Director of Development at (339) 883-1383.

Centerboard Federal Tax ID# 04-3019658

● Empowering Families, Young People and Communities for Success! ●

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We'd like to keep you informed, however, if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or you'd like to receive this by email, please let us know by phone (339) 883-1383 or email rpasciuto@centerboard.org.

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