



City Mission Society

Fall 2010

Uniting Communities • Transforming Individuals

BOSTON

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Bad News and the Good News

As I write this article I am saddened and shaken by the headline: "four dead on Boston streets, including a toddler, and a fifth victim is not expected to live." It is heart-breaking and outrageous that in a world-class city our children are dying due to senseless violence and we cannot protect them. This is going to be a difficult season for CMS as we minister to youth and families who cry out asking "why?" We will be asked to do more with less as we attend many community and policy meetings and mobilize urban and suburban partners to once again respond to increasing violence in the city.

The good news is that in spite of dwindling grants and budget constraints, CMS's *Youth Peace Empowerment* program provided a safe space and enrichment programs for 350 at-risk youth this summer! This was possible due to the generosity of loyal supporters and funders. The Lenny Zakim Fund has been one of those outstanding partners. In addition to providing funding for our summer program, the Fund offered CMS donors an opportunity to support our *YPE* work through a matching gift program. Thanks to the generosity of congregations, community-groups and individuals we exceeded the challenge, almost threefold!

We are all in uncharted waters when it comes to solving the problem of youth handgun violence in the city. Traditional strategies are not working; it is necessary to reexamine the current operating paradigm. Working with community residents, service providers, and youth in the Humboldt neighborhood of Boston, we believe youth violence is only a symptom of the breakdown of our cultural norms, values, and institutions. Solutions must focus on knitting back the fabric of the community block by block, neighborhood by neighborhood. With your support CMS will continue to strive for peace and justice by working with partners old and new to transform individuals and unite communities across Greater Boston.

Pray Peace,
Rev. June R. Davis Cooper



▲ Youth Peace Empowerment Participants



Special Thanks

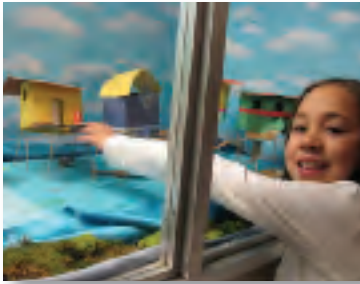
The following churches contributed generously, making it possible for CMS to not only match the Lenny Zakim Fund grant, but to surpass it by nearly three times the required amount:

- United Church of Christ of Medfield
- Memorial Congregational Church, UCC, Sudbury
- United Parish of Auburndale
- Edwards Church, Framingham
- First Congregational Church, UCC, Fall River
- King's Chapel, Boston

To ensure that CMS programs continue to thrive, please send your donations by check or go to cmsboston.org to donate online. Contact CMS about creating a bequest or memorial gift.

cmsboston.org

Many Years of Service and Commitment



▲ "Pueblo" by a 4th grader at Hurley Elementary School in Boston.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Sara Ting and Jorge Drosten who served as Artists in Residence in the *Youth Arts* program for over 20 years. Both of them began working in this honored school-based arts program under the direction of Ted Thomas, Jr., the program's founder. The *Youth Arts* program was discontinued at the end of this year to allow CMS to focus attention and resources on youth violence prevention.

Sara and Jorge worked at the Curley, Hennigan, and Louis Agassiz Elementary Schools in Jamaica Plain and the Hurley and Blackstone Elementary Schools in the South End. Over the years, Sara and Jorge touched the lives of countless children. They helped children express their ideas and values. Words can never express our appreciation for their commitment to the children, teachers and administrators they served and with whom they shared their wonderful gifts and talents. Numerous parents, teachers, and friends, including our funding and supporting partners, have been richly blessed by the children's poetry, art, puppetry, and writing. Jorge and Sara will always be a valued part of the CMS community.

Being Different

I am a black American
I have friends
Who shine on me and
Make me feel warm
Like a soft blanket
Why can't we all
Shine together like
A big family of friends

Written by a Hennigan School Third Grader

CMS: Empowering Youth

YOUTH PEACE EMPOWERMENT

Summer Peace Program



◀ "Kid Fresh" (far right), winner of the YPE Talent Show, poses with young fans

Thanks to an exceptional group of youth and a lot of hard work, CMS successfully completed its fifth annual *Youth Peace Empowerment (YPE) Summer* program, and this was the most successful yet. YPE Outreach Coordinator Rev. Annie L. Belmer led the program, assisted by the Youth Advocacy Council and *Seminarians in the City* participant Paris Cherry.

Over 350 youth took part in *YPE* events, from July 9 to September 10, nearly double the number from last summer. The Kick-Off Barbeque was held at Roxbury's Laviscount Park, attracting over 30 people. The following day, the Basketball Tournament attracted six teams of eight, plus coaches and spectators to total 60. Other popular events were showing the video *Jahmol's Vision for Youth Peace* at Huntington Ave. YMCA; National Night Out; Talent Show; and closing Peace Fest.

Events also included educational activities. Three nights were devoted to an important trust-building discussion between youth and police officers, many of whom serve the neighborhoods where the youth live. These "Youth-Police Dialogs" were presented in collaboration with the Boston YWCA and held at Eliot Church in Roxbury.

Led by Rev. Annie and Paris, Youth Advocacy Council members were active in planning events, learning leadership skills. Council members made important connections with other youth-serving organizations and bonded through special experiences like a trip to the Harbor Islands. Two of the council members were sponsored by John Hancock, and had the chance to attend job readiness seminars on Fridays throughout the summer.

The *YPE Summer* program for 2010 was made possible by support from the Boston Foundation, the City of Boston's "Boston ROCKS!!!" program, the Citizens Bank/Black Ministerial Alliance's "Teen Café" program, and the Lenny Zakim Fund. Thanks especially to our partner congregations, many of whom responded to our last minute request and provided necessary funding: St. Mark Congregational Church; Bethel Pentecostal Church; Greater Generations Tabernacle Church; United Church of Christ in Medfield; King's Chapel, Boston; Memorial Congregational Church, Sudbury; Eliot Church, Newton; United Parish, Auburndale; Edwards Church, Framingham; and First Congregational Church, Fall River.

Boston Urban Outreach Has a Sizzling Summer

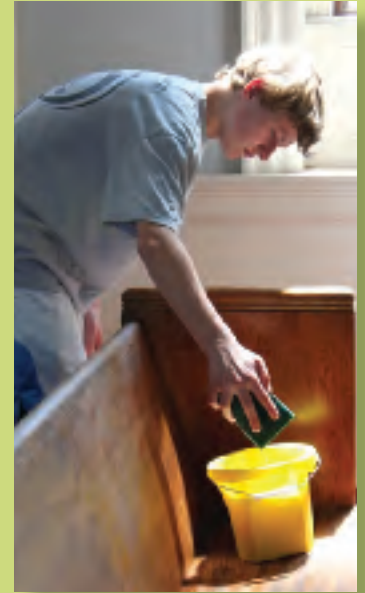
This summer, *Boston Urban Outreach* hosted 13 groups with over 400 volunteers serving an estimated 4,800 hours and impacting the lives of over 22,500 people. In addition to hosting 200 volunteers who attended the UCC New England Regional Youth Event, groups came from Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and Jewish congregations. Hundreds of sandwiches were prepared and distributed, thousands of meals were served, several walls were painted, lots of gardening and yard work was completed, mountains of clothing were sorted for distribution and pounds of books were sent to prisons.

In the midst of all of this activity, lives were transformed. Evaluations show us that members of under served populations were astounded to learn that people actually volunteer their time during the summer to serve others. But equally important is the impact this work has on the



volunteers themselves. One youth shared that "because of the experience, she no longer looks at the world as 'us' and 'them.' She said when she sat down to dinner with a person who had been homeless, she looked across the table and saw a 'homeless person.' At the end of the meal, she just saw a 'person.'" Through service and educational events, we work to bring people together to develop relationships with a lasting impact on their lives.

1.15.2011



MLK Event Takes On a New Format

On January 15, 2011, we will host our Fourth Annual *MLK Day of Service and Learning*. Responding to requests to get groups working earlier in the day, participants will go directly to the service sites working from 9:30 AM–12:30 PM. At 1:00 PM we will gather at United Parish in Brookline for lunch and closing reflections.

Pledges will replace the participation fee, allowing for more people to get involved. This will generate funds to share with service sites.

Three partner sites will host the majority of volunteers. **People Making a Difference** will coordinate the assembly of LEGO Biology kits for Boston Public Schools. The **Newton Community Center** which houses ten non-profit organizations will host groups at three facilities. Others will go to residential treatment and housing facilities for homeless individuals and families operated by **Victory Programs**.

To register, visit cmsboston.org.

Participate in the Joy of the Holidays

For over twenty years, CMS has been making Christmas a little brighter for those who might otherwise not be able to celebrate. Thousands of dollars worth of new items are donated by our partner churches and organizations. These items are then sorted, packed, and distributed to over 20 agencies and churches for their clients. Participants in CMS programs such as *A Lift Up* and the *YPE* program also benefit from the Shop.

You can get involved by coordinating a group from your church, office, social group or family to purchase gifts to donate. You could start a gift card drive that would provide much needed gift cards to the Shop. These are very convenient to purchase and allow us to fill difficult requests. You can offer to volunteer. Bring your family, friends, co-workers or come by yourself. You can help us seek sponsors for our families and financial support for the Shop. Come join the fun and make your Christmas brighter as you serve others. For more information visit cmsboston.org.



Items Needed:

- Gift Cards from Target, Walgreens, CVS, Stop & Shop, and Shaws
- Coats for all ages
- Packages of white socks
- Underwear
- Sweatshirts
- Toys, books, games
- Blankets
- Hats, gloves, scarves

CMS Welcomes New Staff Member

CMS is proud to announce that Linda Troutman has accepted the position as Director of *Homelessness Prevention*. While finishing her Master's of Social Work at Wheelock College in 2009-10, Linda served her internship with *A Lift Up*. As the Director, Linda will oversee the *Emergency Needs Network*, which provides urgent help to low-income residents in danger of becoming homeless, and *ALU*, which offers case management services to women who are heads of households with minor children.

Her previous experience includes working as a counselor for troubled youth in alternative schools; case management for families with disabilities; and field research in the area of women's issues, including an internship with the Women's Foundation of Nepal. Having worked closely with the previous director of

Homelessness Prevention and last year's participating mothers of *ALU*, she brings experience specific to the workings of CMS and a particular passion and vision for the future of this program.

In the coming year, Linda hopes to:

- 1) implement expanded opportunities for volunteers to assist more directly with *ALU* events;
- 2) connect participants with more opportunities to pursue their goals; and
- 3) invest in the CMS community through partnering programs. Her major goal is to expand the program with more resources and opportunities for *ALU* women as well as increase the number of participants served.



Welcome New Interns

We are pleased to have four new students who will be sharing their skills with CMS for the coming year. We don't see these interns as "low paid" staffers, but feel that just as they can learn how a non-profit operates, so we can learn from their diverse backgrounds.

Elena Mireles is a student at Boston College, studying in a dual-degree Master's program in Social Work and Theological Studies. She will be working in various capacities to support special events, such as the CROP Walk, *BUO* and the *MLK Day of Service*. Her previous experience included working with community-based educational and welfare programs in South America and Los Angeles. She also worked extensively with small Christian communities through the Christian Life Community organization. Elena's interest in community organizing and programming rooted within a faith-based approach led her to intern with CMS this year.

Inga Kelly Weiss studies social work at Catholic University of Applied Science North Rhine Westphalia in Aachen, Germany. Her focus is on working with youth, including street work and drug prevention. Kelly chose to broaden her horizons by completing her internship overseas. In addition to an interest in the *Youth Peace Empowerment* program, Kelly also follows the Boston sports teams, so CMS was the perfect choice for her. Kelly was active in the *YPE Summer* program and will assist with launching the *YPE Leadership* program.

Iris Hardin is a second-year seminary student at Andover Newton Theological School, preparing for the Unitarian Universalist ministry. She has always felt called to community ministry. Iris chose CMS as a field education site both because of what she brings and because of what she has yet to learn. Iris says that her "own experience is limited to communities of privilege and she does not want to be a minister who is afraid or ill-equipped to move into places that are unfamiliar and, therefore,



▲ Pictured (l to r) Kelly Weiss, Elena Mireles, and Iris Hardin

uncomfortable or intimidating. I want to develop an ability to step outside what I have always known so that I can mature more fully into ministry and be in meaningful relationship with others." Iris will concentrate her field education within the *BUO* program.

Nicole Biggs is an advanced-standing student at Wheelock College School of Social Work. Nicole previously worked with the child welfare protective system in Roxbury, a pre-independent living group home for adolescent boys and families who have loved ones with disabilities. She felt that CMS would be the best fit for her internship because of the organization's passion to unite communities and promote social justice for all the individuals we serve. Nicole's primary focus will be working with the *A Lift Up* program.

Youth All Year Round

PEACE PROGRAM

"To Bigotry, No Sanction. To Persecution, No Assistance."

This summer, the Revs. June Cooper and Annie L. Belmer represented CMS at an Interfaith Prayer Breakfast in Cambridge, MA, attended by Governor Deval Patrick, community-leaders, clergy and laypeople. The breakfast provided an opportunity for community members to come together and talk about how faith communities can cooperate to build effective partnerships and stronger neighborhoods in Greater Boston.

On Tuesday, September 7, 2010, a large gathering of inter-religious leaders gathered on the grounds of the State House to issue a new interfaith statement calling for tolerance in the wake of escalating fear and anti-Muslim sentiments. CMS signed the petition which can be viewed at ipetitions.com/petition/tobigotryno-sanction. Please share this with your friends and colleagues and continue conversations about religious tolerance and what we can do to address bigotry.



▲ CMS Executive Director Rev. June Cooper, Governor Deval Patrick, and Rev. Annie L. Belmer, YPE Outreach Coordinator, at the Interfaith Prayer Breakfast

CMS INTERNS

Seminarians in the City

CMS has been fortunate to host talented interns. We rely on interns to fulfill our mission, and in return, they get wide latitude in contributing to challenging and interesting projects.

Thanks to continued funding from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, this year CMS has worked with four theology students in the *Seminarians in the City* program. Students met weekly for theological reflection and supervision led by Associate Director Paul Baxter.

Charla Kouadio from Andover Newton Theological School worked for a semester at Ecclesia Ministries' "common art" program. In the spring, she led YPE participants in creating a digital map of their neighborhood, showing resources and landmarks from their perspective. View the map at cmsboston.org/grove-hall-mapping-project.html.

William (Bill) Cordts, a student at Boston University School of Theology, assisted with *Boston Urban*

Outreach. Bill met with several groups, improved the process for collecting evaluations, and created worksite directions for *BUO* participants. Bill assisted with a grant application for funding to upgrade our computer network.

Paris Cherry, a Boston Baptist College student, worked in the *YPE Summer* program. With Rev. Annie Belmer, Paris led YPE sessions and helped with ten weeks of events, including the Peace Fest and Talent Show. Paris, a former college basketball player, utilized his skills to coordinate the summer basketball program, including a tournament with six teams. In addition, Paris led Saturday basketball clinics for youth at Malcolm X Park and the Quincy Street Play Area.

Adwoa Lewis-Wilson, a member at First Church in Cambridge, came to us as part of her discernment process. She worked closely with Pilgrim Church Outreach and *BUO* groups, as well as creating prayer stations focusing on homelessness.

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City Mission Society of Boston

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CMS in the Community

Y.P.E. Leadership Program
October 2010–May 2011
YMCA, 316 Huntington Ave., Boston

Great American Book Drive
November 6, 2010
The Non-Profit Center
89 South Street, Boston



Annual Christmas Shop
December 11–12, 2010
December 18–19, 2010
First Congregational Church
21 Church Street, Winchester

MLK Day of Service and Learning
January 15, 2011
United Parish
210 Harvard Street, Brookline, MA

STAFF

City Mission Society of Boston

Rev. June R. Davis Cooper	Executive Director
Paul Baxter, Ph.D.	Associate Director
Carl McDonald	Director, Boston Urban Outreach
Linda Troutman, MSW	Director, Homelessness Prevention
Brian Donnell	Director, Administration and Finance
Rev. Annie L. Belmer	Coordinator, Youth Peace Outreach
Susan Thomas	Office Administrator
Rebecca Moryl, Ph.D.	Development Consultant
Carol Gracia, Bob Gracia	Office Volunteers

Interns

Nicole Biggs	Wheelock School of Social Work
Paris Cherry	Boston Baptist College
William Cordts	Boston University School of Theology
Iris Hardin	Andover Newton Theological School
Adwoa Lewis-Wilson	First Church in Cambridge, Congregational
Elena Mireles	Boston College, School of Social Work
Inga Kelly Weiss	Catholic University of Applied Science, North Rhine Westphalia