

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

# 30 LESSONS

**Roca** **30**  **RELENTLESS.  
PROVING CHANGE IS POSSIBLE.**

## DEAR ROCA FRIENDS,

Thirty years ago, out of a small storefront in Chelsea, Roca chased a dream.

We dreamed of creating a place where young people who were left out, feared, and forgotten could truly belong.

In our city streets, we found young people whose daily lives were tragically impacted by violence, poverty, incarceration, and trauma. With them, we built a place where they too can grow, learn, and chase their own dreams.

But Roca isn't just about dreams. It's a place where we prove every day that hard and meaningful change can, in fact, happen.

We prove that even though it's hard to put the guns down, you can start to build your life. Even if you can't make it through a GED program or any vocational training, you can make progress. And even if you mess up, fail, and don't show up – there is a place where you can belong, find safety, and gain the skills that promise freedom.

And we're relentless about it.

There's nothing flashy about this dream of belonging. Roca is simply an effort to build a solid, stable starting line for young people who have been left behind.

We've been immeasurably fortunate to have your trust, support, and advice as we ourselves grew and learned. With more than 1,150 young people we were honored to meet this year, we thank you for chasing so many young people's dreams with us and making them possible.

As we turn 30, we want to share with you 30 lessons we have learned over the years. These are the foundational beliefs and organizational learnings we strive to practice every day. We hope to learn much more in the years to come!

Thank you for the privilege of learning alongside you each and every day.

Sincerely,



**Molly Baldwin**

*Founder & CEO, Roca*



# FY2018 PROGRAM UPDATES

**Next Stop: Baltimore** | Announced Roca Baltimore, our first out-of-state replication, and completed all the groundwork to serve young men starting FY2019

**Young Men Program** | Launched Roca Holyoke, our fifth site in Massachusetts

**Young Mothers Program** | Launched 2GEN programming and opened first program replication in Springfield, MA

**Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT)** | Rolled out the full and revised version of Roca's CBT curriculum across all Roca programs

**Pay for Success** | Analyzed Roca's performance and the project's evaluation design with our partners in order to produce meaningful insights in FY2019

**Safe and Successful Youth Initiative** | Celebrated 8 years of partnership with state government and city police departments, now serving Chelsea, Springfield, Lynn, and Holyoke

**Central American Youth Project** | Expanded Roca's unique initiative to help high-risk unaccompanied minors avoid gang involvement

**Criminal Justice Reform** | Joined forces with countless advocates and policymakers to pass Massachusetts' most comprehensive criminal justice bill in decades

**Young Adult Justice Working Groups** | Brought together criminal justice and law enforcement leaders to study and pilot new approaches statewide and locally in Hampden, Essex, and Suffolk Counties

## ROCA'S INTERVENTION MODEL

Roca serves young adults (ages 16-24) at critical risk who are not ready, willing, or able to participate in programs, educational opportunities, or jobs



### RELENTLESS OUTREACH

We knock on doors, engage and reengage young people, and never give up



### TRANSFORMATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

We build meaningful relationships with young people for the purpose of behavior change



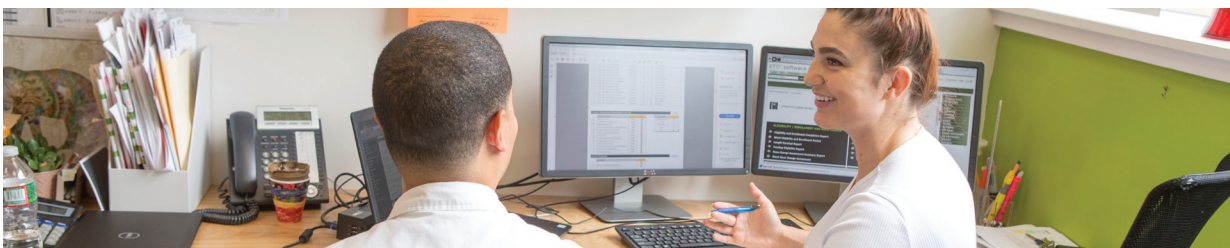
### STAGE-BASED PROGRAMMING

Our programming is tailored to meet young people where they are, cognitively and behaviorally



### ENGAGED INSTITUTIONS

We strategically engage systems and organizations that are essential to young people's change process



### PERFORMANCE-BASED MANAGEMENT

We rigorously track data and continuously evaluate our strategies and outcomes



# OUR FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS

## LESSON 1

### YOU MATTER.

*We all want to matter. Young people often believe they don't. At Roca, we believe that every young person – regardless of how angry, isolated, or afraid – matters. Today, more than ever, we need to show them just how much they matter.*

**942**

HIGH-RISK  
YOUNG MEN  
SERVED IN  
FY2018

**211**

HIGH-RISK  
YOUNG  
MOTHERS  
SERVED IN  
FY2018

**66%**

OF THE 267  
YOUNG MEN WHO  
WERE PLACED IN  
OUTSIDE JOBS  
HELD THEIR  
JOBS FOR AT  
LEAST SIX  
MONTHS



## LESSON 2

### CHANGE IS POSSIBLE.

*People can change. Young people who are left out, feared, and forgotten – they, too, can change. Our work teaches us that with enough time and the right opportunities, young people can make unbelievable changes in their lives.*

**95%**

OF THE  
87 YOUNG MOTHERS WHO  
WERE PLACED IN OUTSIDE JOBS  
HELD THEIR JOBS FOR AT  
LEAST SIX MONTHS



# OUR FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS

## LESSON 3

### LESS JAIL IS MORE FUTURE.

*The status quo of mass incarceration is unacceptable. The havoc it wreaks on individuals, families, and state budgets is unparalleled. This can't be the new normal for young people in our cities. At Roca, we prove that the place for high-risk young people doesn't have to be prison cells - our outcomes prove that they can live, work, and thrive in their own communities.*

**88%** OF THE 277  
YOUNG MEN  
WHO COMPLETED THE  
FIRST TWO YEARS OF  
ROCA'S INTERVENTION MODEL  
**HAD NO  
NEW ARRESTS**



**“** Hiring Roca young men as part of the Transitional Employment Program is not just good for business – it fills us with hope.”

– AMY ROBERTS, SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR, BALISE AUTO

## LESSON 4

### PROGRESS HAPPENS WITH WORK.

*Work is more than a paycheck. Often, it's how you bring about change. When young people work, they build their own future, support their families, discover their passions, make mistakes, and make their dreams come true. Learning how to work is hard, but it is the best way to make progress.*

**334** YOUNG PEOPLE AND **39** EMPLOYERS  
PARTICIPATED IN ROCA'S  
**TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM,**  
WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE EARN REAL MONEY FOR  
REAL WORK WHILE BUILDING THEIR JOB SKILLS



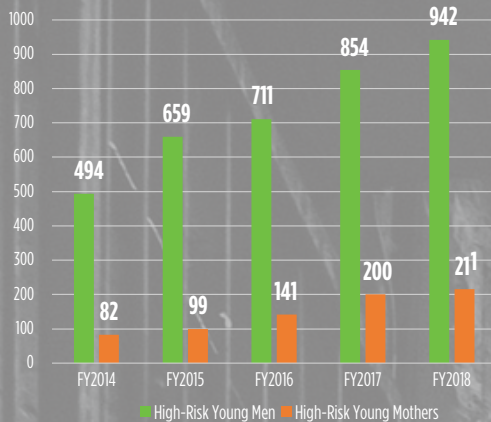
# OUR EVERYDAY WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

## LESSON 5

### JUSTICE IS A VERB.

*Justice is not a state of being. Justice is in the doing, and we need to work for it every day.*

#### YOUNG PEOPLE IN ROCA'S INTERVENTION MODEL



## LESSON 8

### SHOW UP.

*We show up for young people until they are ready to show up for themselves. Change starts when we leave our comfort zone, go out in the streets, and show up.*

**23** ROCA YOUTH WORKERS  
COMPLETED **96,714** ATTEMPTS  
TO REACH YOUNG PEOPLE.  
**24,123** TIMES, THERE WAS NO  
RESPONSE. OUR YOUTH WORKERS  
THEN TRIED AGAIN, AND AGAIN,  
AND AGAIN.

“ I see a big difference to where I was at 16. I have always been in the streets, I started running around at 9. Now after work, I go straight home, I chill with nobody I used to chill with. I'm a team leader on a Roca work crew. We all treat each other like we're brothers. I get here at like 6:20 every morning. I just want to push myself.”

— JOHN, ROCA BOSTON PARTICIPANT

## LESSON 6

### IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE IN A YOUNG PERSON'S LIFE.

*Young people are our best teachers. We see young people who face racism, violence, grinding poverty, and lack of opportunities on a daily basis – and still manage to move forward. We always remember how hard it is to let someone in your own life and we strive to be worthy of this privilege.*

## LESSON 9

### BE RELENTLESS.

*We learned that we have to be pains-in-the-butt. Not because it's a great reputation to have – although we do carry this title with honor – but because it works. Roca's persistence with young people and partners is what paves the way for lasting change.*

“ Sometimes I feel people should get an award for the mere fact they put up with us for 30 years. I may have been at Roca the longest – and for sure am the biggest pain in the butt here – but what a stellar, relentless team we've got. I am just amazed.”

— MOLLY BALDWIN, FOUNDER AND CEO

## LESSON 7

### WHAT ABOUT THE ONES WHO TELL YOU NO?

*Roca serves them anyway. Tragically, there are almost no programs for young people who are not ready for change. These young people, who deny services, leave programs, and are in harm's way, are at the heart of our work.*

“ I was in jail when I first met my youth worker. I see a Roca shirt, and she's just in the window smiling. I'm just looking, trying to figure out who she was. She said, 'I'll see you at your court date.' She picked me up from court when I was getting released and took me out to lunch. My mind was still on that street stuff. I wasn't trying to find a program.”

— DERRICK, ROCA BOSTON PARTICIPANT

“ My youth worker was always on top of me, always showing up at my house. Any time I needed her, she was there. She always has advice, no matter if I take it or not. I think she just wants the best for me.”

— SHAWNNA, ROCA YOUNG MOTHERS PARTICIPANT

## LESSON 10

### RELATIONSHIPS CHANGE LIVES.

*Almost any meaningful change – in our own lives and in the lives of our young people – happens in the context of a relationship with another person. Because our young people are so often isolated and disconnected, building a deep, trusting relationship with them is our best bet in helping them build the life they want.*



# OUR EVERYDAY WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

## LESSON 11

### EXPECT THE RELAPSE.

*Setbacks are part of any change process, and we don't expect any different from our young people. And because relapse is expected, it's on us to be there for young people when it happens.*



*For the young people we meet, relapses often mean being kicked out, left out, and locked up. Our job at Roca is to build a relationship, push through the hard stuff, and embrace the relapse. Through the relapse we help them see that they can stay engaged, bounce back, and grow."*

— ANISHA CHABLANI-MEDLEY, CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER

## LESSON 12

### THINK DIFFERENT TO DO DIFFERENT.

*Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT) teaches us that our thoughts, emotions, and actions are all connected, and that understanding these cycles can help us stop spinning and start making choices.*



*I use CBT without even knowing it. I'm a hot head – I get mad about all kinds of stuff. It's just like, flexing your thinking, thinking about what's better for you in the long run, and just breaking apart different situations so you understand yourself a little better."*

— RAFALIN, ROCA BOSTON PARTICIPANT

## LESSON 13

### USE DATA.

*Data is not just numbers—it's people's lives. If we want to do things that matter, we have to track our work, measure its effectiveness, and learn from the results. Using data is how we keep our promise to do justice by young people every day.*

## LESSON 14

### WE CAN NEITHER ARREST NOR PROGRAM OUR WAY OUT OF VIOLENCE.

*The solution for violence in our cities can't come from enforcement alone – but at the same time, we can't count on programs to be the magic solution either. This is why we never lose sight of the efforts to change systems and build new partnerships.*



*Public safety in Chelsea today has strong ties to Roca's work. Through years of partnership we keep learning, get to the real issues, and make our city safer."*

— CAPTAIN DAVE BATCHELOR, CHELSEA POLICE DEPARTMENT

## LESSON 15

### YES, THEIR BRAINS ARE DIFFERENT.

*Neuroscience teaches us that young people's brains continue to develop at least until their mid-20s. This single fact validates everything we have observed about decision making, emotional regulation, and risk taking among the young people we serve. And it provides a clear call to action for the criminal justice system.*



*One of the big questions ahead of us is how to achieve better outcomes for young adults involved in the criminal justice system. We continue to review all the data regarding this population, review the brain science literature, review our own recidivism rates, and study other justice systems which show there is much to consider. Having organizations like Roca focus on real solutions and long-term outcomes challenges us to consider new and different options."*

— HONORABLE PAULA CAREY, CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE MASSACHUSETTS TRIAL COURT



# HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

“ We believe the approach to violence reduction must be holistic. As we continue to look at the best practices throughout the nation, Roca stands apart. Bringing Roca to Baltimore supports all that we’re doing to lift those most vulnerable to the lure of crime and violence and to change their trajectory, even as we work to make Baltimore a safer city for all.”

— CATHERINE E. PUGH, BALTIMORE MAYOR

## LESSON 16

### WHAT’S YOUR THEORY OF CHANGE?

*We must always have a clear definition of our target population, the outcomes we want to see for them, and the strategies that will lead them there. Having undergone five theory of change processes, we found that this process can bring clarity to other partners and systems, too.*

**12.13.17**

**ANNOUNCING  
ROCA BALTIMORE**

## LESSON 17

### CIRCLE UP.

*Peacemaking Circles allow us to see each other differently. They create a space where people can meet as equals, deep reflection can happen, and meaningful change can start. When we need grounding, we turn to circles.*

“ I’m not used to opening up to people, and telling them my business. When I did circle, I was going through a lot of loss. I got closer to people through that circle. You can be like ‘Yo, there is no possible way she can relate to me or understand me.’ But you really never know until you know somebody, and you know what they went through and the problems they had to deal with growing up. I definitely respect some of those people a lot more.”

— DAVONN, ROCA BOSTON PARTICIPANT

## LESSON 19

### WHEN IT’S DIFFICULT, STICK WITH IT.

*Our young people teach us resilience. We learned that if we hang in there when we struggle, we can get to a safer place.*

“

*I used to come to Roca in a bad mood, taking it out on the people here. I wasn’t caring about my job, and used to leave my daughter with my mom. Sometimes they say that the people that smile the most are just the ones that are going through it. And it’s crazy because I’ve been noticing it about myself.”*

— BEVERLYN, ROCA YOUNG MOTHERS PARTICIPANT

## LESSON 18

### STOP DOING STUPID THINGS.

*We learned that when things don’t work, we should change them. In 30 years, we’ve made some wrong turns, and had to find our way. Today, if we see something that needs to be fixed, we call it out and help fix it.*

**52% OF YOUNG ADULTS  
RELEASED FROM MASSACHUSETTS  
JAILS ARE RE-INCARCERATED  
WITHIN THREE YEARS.**

**343 PEOPLE WERE MURDERED  
IN BALTIMORE LAST YEAR.**

**THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE.  
IT WILL CHANGE.**





# HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

“ Our young people have a good BS detector. They are always trying to read you until that trust is built and they can bring that guard down and share something real with you. When we have these conversations, you’re speaking through emotions, you’re speaking through their trauma. For me, I just try to put on that cloak of empathy.”

— RAJON BROOKS, EMPLOYMENT MANAGER

## LESSON 20

### DON'T AVOID THE HARD CONVERSATION.

*We don't build trust with young people just to be their friends – we want to help them make the hard changes they so want and need. You can't help anyone make hard changes in their lives unless you get to the deep, real issues that keep them stuck.*

## LESSON 21

### IT'S WORTH TAKING THE RISK.

*Committing to serve young people who are seen as a threat and sometimes cause harm means that we have to take risks and manage risk all the time. Building Roca was and will always be a long-term commitment to take real and big risks for young people. They matter.*

“ Our multiyear investment in Roca's Young Mothers Program is our way to help Roca take its innovation to the next level. Roca takes risks on these young women when nobody else will, proves that it works, and continues to learn. We are happy to support Roca to build not only the program itself, but also the evidence of how and why it is so effective. Roca is the absolute expert in this area and its approach needs to be shared.”

— ADELINE AZRACK, USA PROGRAM DIRECTOR, FONDATION CHANEL

## LESSON 22

### NOTHING HAPPENS OVERNIGHT.

*It's all about the long-distance run. With each young person, we spend two intensive years and two follow-up years. With larger systems and with our own organization, change sometimes takes years.*

“ I joined Roca in 2001 and never left. I was a youth worker, a job developer, a home visitor, a coordinator, and then again a youth worker and a supervisor. When I see young people who graduated working, supporting their families, and smiling, I always remember how hard it was for them at the beginning. Kicking, screaming, everything. It really does take time.”

— PAOLA ROJAS, TRANSFORMATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS MANAGER, ROCA YOUNG MOTHERS PROGRAM

## LESSON 23

### WHAT CAN YOU DO TODAY?

*When things are overwhelming, too complicated, or too hard, we need to slow down and focus on what is in front of us today.*

“ The working group I established with Roca is one of the main public safety initiatives we're taking in Hampden County. In collaboration with our law enforcement and court partners, we're developing a smart approach to young adults in Springfield, Holyoke, and beyond. These are exciting times in Western Mass – and Roca is the engine of this effort.”

— ANTHONY GULLUNI, HAMPDEN COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY





# MAKING IT WORK



## LESSON 24

### GIVE THE BEST YOU CAN.

*Young people deserve our very best. To bring our best selves to the work, we need to support each other, know our boundaries, and fill up our tanks.*

WHEN WE GIVE THE BEST  
WE CAN, WE DON'T LOSE  
SIGHT OF YOUNG PEOPLE:

ROCA CONTINUES TO  
ENGAGE

**78%**

OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE  
WE MET THIS YEAR

## LESSON 25

### BRING THE BANDWIDTH.

*When young people and communities bring complex challenges, bringing the organizational bandwidth to unpack them – staff, partners, experience, and expertise – is critical.*

“

We brought Roca to Holyoke because we wanted solutions. Roca has the capacity to do what may seem impossible: reach the highest-risk young men who won't engage, stay on them for four years, and help them become a viable part of our economy. For a city like Holyoke, a partner that delivers and keeps challenging us to improve is just a huge asset.”

– ALEX MORSE, HOLYOKE MAYOR

“

I have a team of go getters. Morning, noon, and night they are trying to figure out what else can they do for their young people – more jobs, more programming, or yet another knock on the door. I always enjoy watching how they lean on each other – when the hard stuff comes, they come out of it together.”

– SCOTT SCHARFFENBERG, CHIEF OPERATION OFFICER

## LESSON 26

### BUILD YOUR TEAM.

*Absolutely no one can do this hard work alone. Our team is our success. And just like our young people, each staff member has their unique story and talents.*

**113** RELENTLESS  
PEOPLE WORKED  
ON ROCA TEAMS





# MAKING IT WORK



## LESSON 27

### THE MORE THE MERRIER.

*It takes a village to do this work. We feel truly blessed when we see so many people working together to help young people build their future.*

We invite you to visit us, celebrate young people's accomplishments at Roca's events, and share your thoughts and feedback. We look forward to hearing from you.

To our staff who knock on doors and don't mind being yelled at; to our partners who are open to giving advice and learning with us; to our supporters who keep believing in young people; and, most importantly, to the young people who allow us in their lives – THANK YOU.

## LESSON 28

### SAY THANK YOU.

*Meeting our young people where they are requires a lot. We never forget that.*

## LESSON 29

### IT ALL BEGINS AND ENDS WITH LOVE.

*We're in this business because we love young people. Because our hearts break when they get hurt, get locked up, and die young. Because our hearts fill with joy when we see them smiling, working, supporting their families, and giving back to their communities.*



## LESSON 30

### WE DON'T HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS.

*We learned that we have to keep learning.*

We just turned 30, but we still have more questions than answers. We hope you will keep learning with us and teaching us on this journey.



ROCA DONORS TO OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS WHO DARE TO HOPE WITH US, THANK YOU.

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Michael Coyne  
Christine Cribb  
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Hope Davis  
Julie Davis  
Sue A. Davis  
Elizabeth De Montigny  
Paul DeGrego  
Alice Dembner  
Kathleen Dennehy-Fay  
Daniela DiFlumeri  
Bauhinia DiMatteo



“ Hope is a state of mind, not a state of the world. Either we have hope within us or we don’t. Hope is not a prognostication—it’s an orientation of the spirit. Hope in this deep and powerful sense is not the same as joy when things are going well, or the willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously headed for early success, but rather an ability to work for something to succeed. Hope is definitely not the same as optimism. It’s not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.”

— VACLAV HAVEL

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Peter J. Forbes  
Parris Frediani  
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Jennifer Geiger  
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Linda Gibbs  
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Jason Gilliland  
Marvin Gilmore  
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Paul Swartz  
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Allison Taff Miguel  
Tech Networks of Boston  
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David Wizer  
Kwok Wong  
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Louise W. Yoder  
Norma Zack





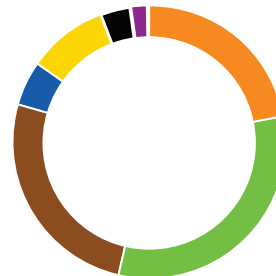
## FINANCIALS

The selected financial information as presented represents the results of the combining operations of Roca, Inc. and Pallin Youth Center, Inc.

Pallin Youth Center is an affiliated not-for-profit corporation of Roca, Inc. and shares a common Board of Directors. Pallin Youth Center was formed in 1996 as a 501(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code for the sole purpose of holding title to property. Combining statements is required under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

### ROCA, INC & PALLIN YOUTH CENTER, INC

#### FY 2018 CONSOLIDATED REVENUES (IN MILLIONS)

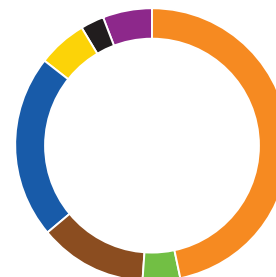


Government - Federal & State	\$2.910	22.3%
PFS	\$4.070	31.2%
Private Grants & Contributions	\$3.370	25.9%
Special Events	\$0.706	5.4%
Earned Revenue	\$1.233	9.5%
Income from Investments	\$0.454	3.5%
In Kind Donations	\$0.281	2.2%

**TOTAL REVENUE** **\$13.024** **100%**

### ROCA, INC & PALLIN YOUTH CENTER, INC

#### FY 2018 CONSOLIDATED EXPENSES (IN MILLIONS)



Adult Wages	\$5.816	46.9%
Youth Wages	\$0.540	4.3%
Payroll Taxes & Fringe	\$1.585	12.8%
Program Services	\$2.686	21.6%
General & Administrative	\$0.738	5.9%
Development & Communications	\$0.359	2.9%
Capacity Building/Evaluation	\$0.694	5.6%

**TOTAL EXPENSES** **\$12.418** **100%**





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Roca is blessed to have a committed group of volunteers who serve on our Board of Directors and our various advisory boards. We extend our deepest thanks to all our board members for their leadership, guidance, and commitment to young people.

**STEWART CHAPIN** - *President*  
Trustee  
Bennett Family Foundation

**BRIAN FITZGERALD** - *Vice President*  
President & CEO  
Fitzgerald Company, Inc.

**CHRISTINE KENDALL** - *Clerk/Secretary*  
Founding Partner  
Smarter Give

**MOLLY BALDWIN**  
Founder & CEO  
Roca, Inc.

**JIM BILDNER**  
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Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation

**MARK HAGGERTY**  
Head of Stock Plan Services  
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**DWIGHT ROBSON**  
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**JOHN M. SHUE**  
Managing Director, Private Equity  
Harvard Management Company, Inc.

**GREG TORRES** - *Honorary*  
Chairman of the Board  
MassINC

\* The list is representative of the board members and officers at the time of publication.





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