30 LESSONS

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
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.

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

FY2018 PROGRAM UPDATES

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
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

66%
OF THE 267 YOUNG MEN WHO WERE PLACED IN OUTSIDE JOBS HELD THEIR JOBS FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS

95%
OF THE 87 YOUNG MOTHERS 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.

211
HIGH-RISK YOUNG MOTHERS SERVED IN FY2018

95% OF THE 211 HIGH-RISK YOUNG MOTHERS SERVED IN FY2018
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.

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.

“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

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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.

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 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.

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.

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.

Lesson 10
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.
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.

“Our everyday work with young people challenges us to consider new and different options.”
— HONORABLE PAULA CAREY, CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE MASSACHUSETTS TRIAL COURT

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
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.

“...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 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 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.

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 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.

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.

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 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.

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.

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.

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

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

113 RELENTLESS PEOPLE WORKED ON ROCA TEAMS
MAKING IT WORK

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 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.

LESSON 28
SAY THANK YOU.
Meeting our young people where they are requires a lot. We never forget that.

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.

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.
ROCA DONORS

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

$1 MILLION +

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$10,000-99,999

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City of Everett
City of Everett, Everett Public Schools
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City of Malden
City of Revere
City of Somerville
City of Springfield
City of Springfield, Office of Community Development (CDBG)
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Mabel Louise Riley Foundation
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Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (Metropolitan Mayor’s Coalition/Shannon Grant)
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Massachusetts General Hospital and Partners HealthCare
Shamus McBride
The MENTOR Network Charitable Foundation
The Nordblom Family Foundation
Patriots Foundation
Penguin Random House
Frank R. Peters Trust
Porticus Foundation
Rockport Mortgage Corporation
Roy A. Hunt Foundation*
Santander Bank
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Sills Family Foundation
Springfield Housing Authority
TD Charitable Foundation
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The William Randolph Hearst Foundation
The Winter-Lehman Family Foundation
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Yawkey Foundation II

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Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management & Maintenance
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Wellesley College
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Womens Benevolent Society
Yotam Zeira
Steve & Ellen Zane

$0-999

Ronald Abdo
Sandra Alboum
Tom and Marsha Alperin
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
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.

### FY 2018 CONSOLIDATED REVENUES (IN MILLIONS)

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government - Federal &amp; State</td>
<td>2.910</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>PFS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Grants &amp; Contributions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earned Revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income from Investments</td>
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<td>In Kind Donations</td>
<td>0.281</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL REVENUE</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.024</strong></td>
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### FY 2018 CONSOLIDATED EXPENSES (IN MILLIONS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Adult Wages</td>
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<td>Youth Wages</td>
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<td>Payroll Taxes &amp; Fringe</td>
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<td>General &amp; Administrative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity Building/Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.418</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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.

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