

# More Than We Can Imagine

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! –Ephesians 3:20-21*

Summer after summer, we have come to realize that whatever expectations we have, whatever we think or hope will happen – **God does more than we could even imagine.** The Boston Project Ministries ran six different youth programs this summer, each unique in its focus and desired impact. There was a lot of activity, and a lot of room for God to move. We hope these stories give you a glimpse of the powerful and often unexpected ways that God is at work.

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## Finding True Treasure in our Neighborhood

BY CARLA BOOKER

Melissa\* deals with the stress of the neighborhood by simply withdrawing. A strong student with an effervescent personality, she rarely ventures out into her own community but prefers to spend her “hang out” time in neighboring communities where summer days tend to be a bit less dramatic.

She allowed me to convince her to attend our final Family Fun Night at Elmhurst Park. On this evening, I watched Melissa flit from table to table socializing with adults and youth alike. She jumped to her feet to applaud and encourage the youth who performed in the talent show. And then she joined in and danced a dance of celebration with neighbors on her left and right.

Later on, when the party had come to its close, Melissa shared with me that she had a glimpse of the community that was possible right in her own “backyard.” She realized that the beautiful time that she’d been a part of was not just for more fortunate or resourced communities, but that **there is a treasure to be found here in the streets of Dorchester!**

Melissa now wants to be a part of bringing such things to her neighborhood. I pray that God would bless this desire and to let His kingdom come in her heart as well as our neighborhood.

\* names changed



CARLA BOOKER is a life-long resident of Dorchester, and served as our NYM Summer Director. She loves to travel and lives in a ministry house much like ours!



BOSTON PROJECT SUMMER STAFF. All of these stories were written by summer staff members, who came from across the country to serve with us for the summer. Above, several staff of the Summer Missions Program.

## Breaking Down Walls Through Relationships

BY ESTHER CHIANG

Amy\* served with The Boston Project for a week as part of our Summer Missions Program. Her youth group is from a fairly homogenous town in Massachusetts, where her encounters with racial diversity primarily came from the media or history class. And as a true middle-school girl, she had no problem expressing her immediate thoughts to others, as blunt as they may sometimes seem.

During her week, the BP staff that led Amy’s team were a very diverse group of young adults. As she grew to love each of us on staff, she became comfortable talking with us and speaking her mind.

One evening, a fellow staff member came in wearing a du-rag (a head wrap often worn by African-American men). Before she could think about the racial undertones of her comment, she blurted out her feelings of fear connected with it. She told him that people who “rob banks and stuff” wear du-rags and he should take it off because he was scaring her.

Her comment, along with comments by others in her group, prompted our staff to

lovingly confront them the next morning. During this time of frank discussion about stereotypes, perceptions, and actions, I saw her eyebrows tense behind her sunglasses.

When we arrived back at the church, she ran crying to the bathroom. She realized the brutality of her words, and felt remorse and guilt. She shared how she felt a deep pit in her stomach that she knew would not go away until she apologized, which she committed to do before the day was done.

That evening, she asked me to help her apologize. But when we couldn’t find my fellow staff member, we decided to pray very specifically. Within the next 20 minutes, she told me breathlessly with a look of peace on her face that our prayers had been answered exactly as we had asked. She had the perfect opportunity to apologize for her ignorance, and because of this experience she will have a keen sensitivity to how her words and actions reflect the love of God.



ESTHER CHIANG served on the 2011 SMP staff, is a student at Bryn Maur College, and came to The Boston Project as a youth (and she never wears matching socks!).

# Mildred's Home

BY BEKA JAUSSEN

I was not ready. In a few hours over 50 teens would be arriving in Dorchester, and I was supposed to lead, teach, love and serve them for a week, but my mind and heart were elsewhere. That weekend, my brother had been in a severe car crash that he should not have walked away from alive. But of course, God knew all this and had a plan.

I had the privilege of working at the home of Mildred\*, a dear 77-year-old woman who lives with her older sister, Rose. Her granddaughter lives in the first floor apartment of their two-family house. Mildred has been a Christian for a long time, which was very evident in her day-to-day life.

Our project that week was to paint the interior of her whole house, since her great-grandsons had colored all over the walls with crayons. When we got to her house I was shocked, but not by the crayons. Picture



frames hung broken on the walls, and there were huge slashes in her sofas. We later learned that the damage was caused by her granddaughter, who would lash out when Mildred refused to give her money.

One day, our team witnessed an argument between Mildred and her granddaughter. I didn't know the best way to respond, but two teenage guys on my team sat everyone down to pray. We discussed how many places we go aren't always happy and joyous but how God is still working, as evidenced in Mildred's patience and love in a hard situation.

That week, everyone both gave and received something special. God used Mildred to care for me in my time of need. God used the teens to show Mildred there is hope in today's youth. The youth blessed us all with their boldness in prayer. And God used me the most when I felt like there was no way I could be used at all.

Oh, and we finished painting, too!



BEKA JAUSSEN served on the 2011 SMP staff, and is now living in Pittsburgh where she is seeking God's will for her life. She has a deep and inspiring love of knowing Scripture.



**PARK PATROL YOUTH CREATE A GARDEN.** This summer, youth serving with The Boston Project transformed a vacant lot into a Children's Community Learning Garden. Pictured here working on the path.

## A Chance Can Change a Life

BY LUCKY EGHAREVBA

Our summer Park Patrol program had already begun when a neighborhood youth, Damaris\*, came looking for a summer job. Damaris is a troubled youth, but we allowed him to join, even though there were many risks associated with this decision. When we told him he was hired he tried not to seem excited, but in his eyes you could tell he was happy. It wasn't long, though, before his rough background began to surface. He was unable to work with others; he could not be part of a team.

It wasn't long before a friend invited him to come to Real Life Bible study. Damaris said, "Maybe." Surprisingly he arrived five minutes early! The message that night was on John 3:16 and how God gave His Son to die for our sins. Touched, Damaris asked a series of questions. Staff member Lucky asked, "What would be your response to God for giving his Son?" Damaris was visibly moved and said, "I would tell him thank you for saving my life and would give him anything and everything that I have."

After that night there was a change in Damaris' conduct towards others. Whenever he needed something he asked in a more polite way, and showed gratitude in return. He grew in his ability to work with his team, and barely complained about doing his tasks. On the last day of his job, he was the most energized worker and took initiative to complete a task that was meant for everyone without being told.

Damaris looks happier now than when he first started with The Boston Project. We believe he was touched by God. We are reminded that all of us need a chance to grow and learn - even when we are considered "risky."

"For God so loved the world..." We are called to love the world as He does; and we know that one transformed young person can make the world a different place!



LUCKY EGHAREVBA served on our 2011 NYM summer staff and is a student at Gordon College. He is living and studying in Jerusalem this semester.



## Want More?

Check out [www.tbpm.org](http://www.tbpm.org) for more stories of how God worked this summer. We will continue to add more stories in coming weeks.

Happy reading!

\* names changed



*We'll miss you both!*



## Staff Transitions: A Special Thanks and Blessing for Nyesha Smith & David Rameau

Praise God for staff members Nyesha and David, and for their incredible contributions to youth and families in our neighborhood! This summer concluded their terms with AmeriCorps. David served with us for 2.5 years (plus 2 summers) and is now a corrections officer, while Nyesha served for 1.5 years and is currently looking for work.



There are hundreds of great things we could say about each of them, but here are our "Top 5" *greatest things about...*

### Nyesha

1. Her prayerful and intercessory heart.
2. Her creative mind used for inspirational children's programs.
3. Her dancing feet! (including both the cha-cha slide and liturgical dance)
4. Her joyful worship every morning.
5. Her commitment to seeing youth's lives transformed for Christ.



### David

1. His ability to see God's goodness and humor in ALL situations.
2. His mentoring of young men in our neighborhood (often through b-ball).
3. His gifting for teaching God's word.
4. His growing humility and grace.
5. His love for neighborhood youth and stretching himself to lead and organize our youth programs.

## Allow us to introduce our 2011 Boston Project Summer Staff



## A special "Thanks!" to all who helped with the Summer of...

Provided summer staff meals: Candice Gormley, Delores McCrackin, Agape Chapel, Neelia & Les Jackson, David and Rebecca Cox, the Frederick Family & First Congregational Church of Kingston, the Mosquera Family, Sarah Chang, Joy Lee, Dwight & Lori Henderson, Joe Fantini & Fantini Bakery, Amy Mal-kemes, Dan & Kelly Vandeputte, the Overholt Family & Community Covenant Church, Dwight Simon, Anne Chen, Park Street Church youth group and Regina Pizzeria for donated pizzas, Chinese Gospel Church of Worcester, Alphonse and Olive Knight, Susan Boyd, Melynda Beverly, Roger Hutchings, Newton Junction Baptist Church; **SMP Groups:** United Church of Lincoln (VT), Hope Community Church (MA), Chinese Bible Church of Greater Nashua (NH), Grace Community Church (MA), Medway Community Church (MA), Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell (MA), Grace Chapel (MA), Chinese Gospel Church (MA), Grace Church (NJ), Trinity Baptist Church (NH), New Life Fellowship (NJ), Life Covenant Church (NJ)

Park Street Church (MA), Stonecrest Church (NJ), Longhill Chapel (NJ), West Congregational Church (MA), Haverhill Alliance Church; **Neighborhood Partners:** Global Ministries Christian Church, Second Church of Dorchester, Calvary Baptist Church, Syria Temple, Codman Square NDC, Boston Police District B-3, TNT Parents United, Lee Academy Pilot School, Boys & Girls Club of Dorchester, Gordon College Boston Urban Semester; **Grants & Special Gifts:** Boston Baptist Social Union, Mt. Washington Bank Charitable Foundation, Dorchester Environmental Health Coalition, The Lenny Zakim Fund, City of Boston Boston ROCKS, The Black Ministerial Alliance, Millennium 10 Initiative, Cathedral High School, Highland Street Foundation, Daniel Janey, Trinitarian Congregational Church, The Gathering Christian Fellowship, Maranatha Retreat Center; **Volunteers:** Bruce Rodriguez, Jaime Mitchell, Paulina Mooney-McCoy, Ella Gross, Healthy Futures, Ming Nagasawa, Dan Koo, Elnora Thompson, Larry Dossantes, Roderick Clouden, Carole Major, Brandon

## Please PRAY for these needs of The Boston Project

**PRAISE GOD** for a safe, life-changing summer for youth, staff, and neighbors, 8 grant awards, for the largest Summer Missions Program ever, a fabulous and gifted summer staff, neighbors stepping into leadership roles, the ability to hire 25 youth employees, and 18 friends who provided meals for summer staff.

**INCREASED OUTREACH & DISCIPLESHIP:** We are excited to launch an Alpha group this fall for unchurched youth in our neighborhood. Pray for BP staff as we prepare for this new approach to our youth Bible study.

**DIRECTION FOR PRESENT & FUTURE STAFF:** Most BP staff are seeking God for clarity in their lives. Pray for us as we wait upon God about church involvement, discipleship, and personal healing. Also pray for us as we search for two new staff, a Children's Outreach Worker and Mission Trip Director.

**LAUNCH OF ACADEMIC YEAR PROGRAMS.** Pray for our planning and transition into outreach programs including Homework Center, Bible Study, the Spot, Service Days, and Community Outreach events.

**SAFETY AND ACTION.** Our immediate neighborhood was relatively safe this summer, but abutting neighborhoods saw increased violence. Continue to pray for more Christians to be part of peacework in Boston.

Please Pray



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# The Boston Project Staff Team

**Summer has come and gone**, and we are looking forward to the fall. With the change of season comes a change of pace. We are able to slow down and find time to reflect on what God has done during the very busy previous months as well as dream about what He has in store for the future.

You will see below that God spoke powerfully during the summer, and our staff experienced an abundance of joy, even through difficulties. **We appreciate your prayers and support, and know that they keep our ministry strong!**



**The Malkemes Family** - Executive Director & Curriculum Director  
 Summer was full and fun, and God was at work in many diverse ways! We are looking forward to a different pace this fall with the transition to homeschooling all three girls. Along with canning food and finishing garden projects, we are hoping to attend a national training conference of the Christian Community Development Association. It will be the first conference in twelve years that Glenna and I will have been able to attend together. Praise God!



**Liz & Ben Cressy** - Executive Assistant & Community Development  
 Our first married summer in ministry started with some literal and metaphorical bangs. Violence in the city made us question our residence in our neighborhood, but we have been reminded of God's redemptive work in the city and feel more committed than ever to living here. Additionally, Ben was offered a full time management position at Ten Thousand Villages and has accepted! He is excited to continue serving with BP, but now as a neighbor and volunteer.



**Dana Chepulis** - Neighborhood Youth Ministries & Green Space  
 I had the privilege this summer of being a co-supervisor of Junior Park Patrol, a leadership program for 12-14 year olds in our neighborhood. We learned how to build compost bins, what a zucchini looks (and tastes!) like, how to plant a garden and more. The best part was getting to know the hearts of the youth. Also, this October I will be moving into the Cressy apartment. It'll be an opportunity to minister more to the youth and to feel a part of a family while away from home.



**The Riddle Family** - Service-Learning Director & Hospitality  
 We had planned for a scaled back summer led by a newly hired Mission Trip Director, but instead we had the largest *Summer Missions Program* ever, led solely by Keith. Yet with these challenges, this summer was great! One highlight was the new "Celebration Dinner" where neighbors whose homes we worked at were invited to join us for fellowship and sharing. It was a blessing to see youth and neighbors ministering to each other in such powerful ways.



**Children's Outreach Worker & Mission Trip Director**  
 The Boston Project is seeking to hire these two new positions starting this fall. Both positions include salary and benefits, plus potential for housing. For more info, visit [www.tbpm.org](http://www.tbpm.org).  
 The **Children's Outreach Worker** should be gifted and passionate about working with elementary age (5-11) students, and is an AmeriCorps position.  
 The **Mission Trip Director** will oversee all of our overnight trips, including the Summer Missions Program, weekend service retreats, and spring break mission trips.

## Financial Update for the General Fund

**We thank God for all the different ways He provides for this ministry!** The General Fund is critical and used to cover primary operating costs such as youth & outreach programs, health insurance, and Ministry House expenses.

However, donations to our General Fund have dropped by 33% over the past two years. **We could use your help more than ever.** By year's end, we need to raise \$30,000. Could you make a special gift to help to support our staff and outreach programs?

*A very special thanks to the 54 people/churches who have given already this year!*

**Raised to date: \$14,988 ▼**

**▼ Need to date: \$30,000**

**33% Thanks!**

*(We have a pressing financial need here.)*

**Goal for 2011: \$45,000**



### Recent Photos

*More from the life of our staff*



- (top-to-bottom) 1. Paul and youth assemble raised beds for the Community Garden.  
 2. Ben is the grill-master at Family Fun Night.  
 3. Dana and youth sporting rain ponchos!  
 4. Keith introduces City Councilor Charles Yancey at a Celebration Dinner.  
 5. A steel pan band entertains us all!*