



BOSTON COLLEGE COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Service - Education - Advocacy



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Boston College Coalition for the Homeless was founded in September 2024 to mobilize the Boston College community in service of Boston's most vulnerable populations. Our team was inspired by time spent volunteering in homeless shelters, soup kitchens, resource navigation centers, and educational programs.



Over the past year, we have been humbled by the extraordinary support and participation of the greater Boston College community.

Thanks to your generosity, we've launched ~~addcipated in~~ ~~insteavids~~, on ~~comdeless~~ and service provision, and most critically provided healthcare to hundreds of unhoused women through our new Foot Clinic at Women's Lunch Place.



We are especially grateful to the unhoused individuals who shared their knowledge and lived experience with us. The guests at Women's Lunch Place, Bridge Over Troubled Waters, Pine Street Inn, and Haley House have been not just beneficiaries, but equal partners in building this coalition.



As affordable housing becomes increasingly scarce in the greater Boston area, we remain committed to meeting this moment with compassion, dignity, and respect. It is with that spirit that we proudly present the 2024–2025 Annual Report.



With gratitude,

Boston College Coalition for the Homeless

THE NEED

There is a growing and urgent need for expanded homeless services in Boston due to the rising number of individuals and families experiencing housing instability. While the city has maintained relatively low rates of unsheltered homelessness compared to national averages, its shelters are increasingly overwhelmed. The Massachusetts right-to-shelter law ensures access to emergency housing for eligible individuals, but the system is stretched thin as new arrivals and economic pressures push more people into crisis. Moreover, homelessness in Boston disproportionately affects Black and Latino communities, underscoring the need for culturally competent and equity-focused services. Supportive housing, mental health care, addiction treatment, and targeted youth and family services are essential to address the root causes of homelessness. Without sustained investment in comprehensive, long-term solutions, temporary measures will continue to fall short of meeting the complex needs of Boston's unhoused population.

Please reference the following sources to view the most recent [annual homelessness census](#) conducted by the City of Boston as well as a relevant [Boston Indicators article](#) on the state of homelessness.



THE MISSION

*“Boston College Coalition for
the Homeless mobilizes
students in*

SERVICE,

EDUCATION, &

ADVOCACY

to advance housing justice.”



SERVICE:

The Foot Clinic at WLP

About

The Boston College Foot Clinic, launched in 2024, is a student-led initiative developed by members of the Boston College Coalition for the Homeless. It is a response to unmet healthcare needs among unhoused women in Boston.

Our team was inspired by our summer internships at the Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program (BHCHP), where we worked in a well-established foot clinic at St. Francis House. The BC Foot Clinic replicates this compassionate care model in a female setting. We believe that healthcare for unhoused populations should be dignified, relationship-centered, and trauma-informed. We aim to bridge a critical gap in services by offering foot care specifically to women, who often avoid co-ed shelters due to a history of trauma and safety concerns.

The BC Foot Clinic operates weekly at Women's Lunch Place (WLP), a day shelter for homeless women. The clinic runs Friday mornings from 8:00 am to 11:00 am. We provide foot washing and inspection, and frequently connect patients to the on-site nurse. Additionally, through conversation and connection, we are able to build trust in an all female setting. Volunteers take the time to build the kind of relational care that fosters long-term trust and facilitates better health outcomes. The BC Foot Clinic is a Collaboration between BC Coalition for the Homeless, Women's Lunch Place, and BHCHP.



WHY A FOOT CLINIC?

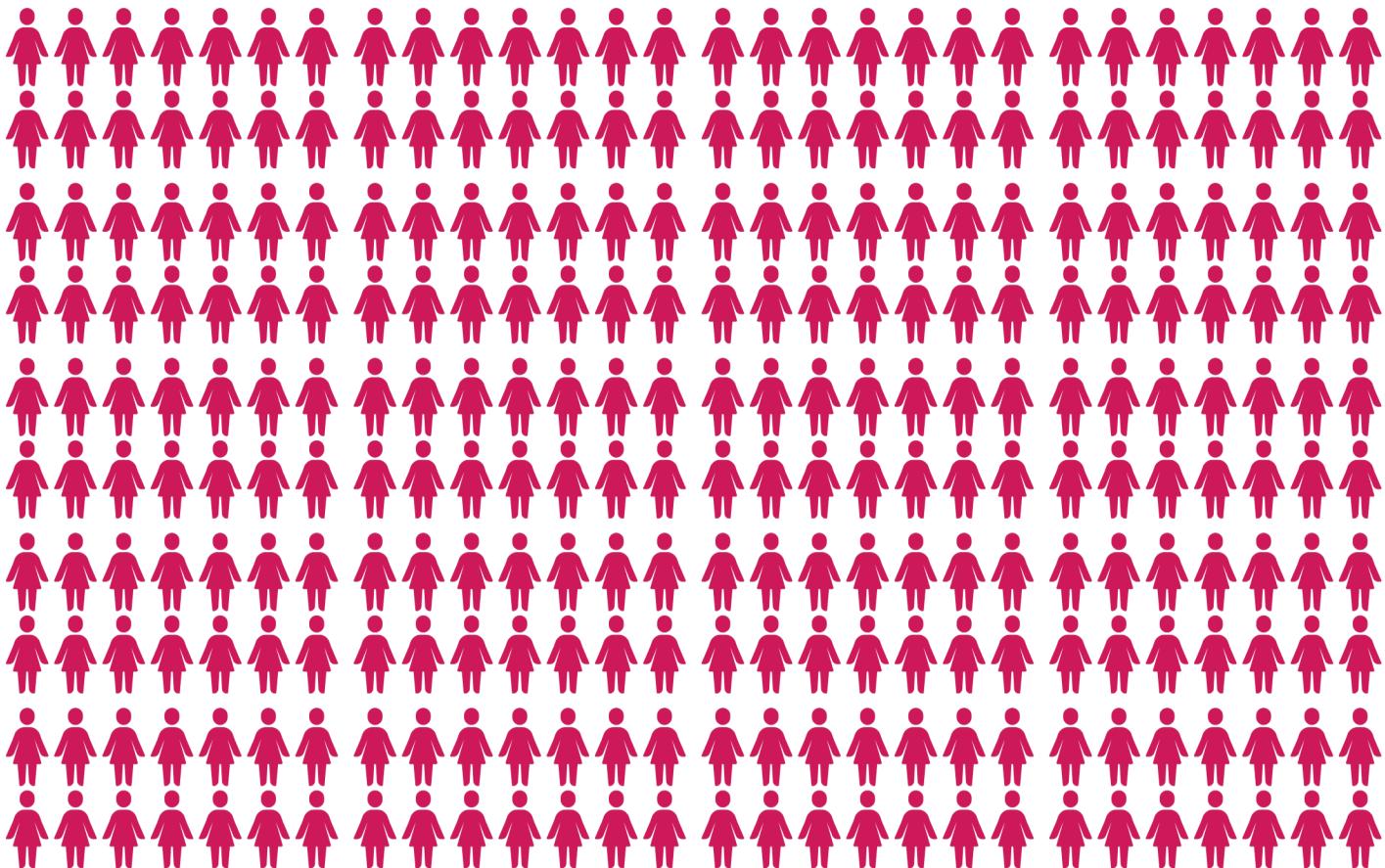
Homeless individuals face unique foot-related health issues, including:

- Fungal Infections - Affect 95% of Boston's homeless due to communal showers. Treatable with antifungal creams.
- Bacterial Infections - Result from wounds or poor circulation. Minor cases need antibiotic ointments; severe cases require referrals.
- Diabetic Ulcers - These form due to nerve damage and poor circulation. Regular cleaning and dry socks help prevent infections.

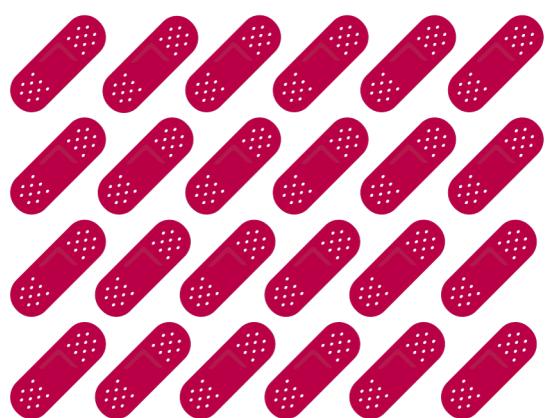


THE BC FOOT CLINIC

by the numbers



257 women seen... and counting!



26 patients referred to nurses

PUBLICATIONS



American Public Health Association's Annual Conference: Poster Presentation

"Gender-based violence and medical mistrust among unhoused women in Boston: health and healing in a foot clinic"



Stories from the Shelter: Literary Publication

A series of conversations between Boston College students and shelter guests, shared with the full permission of participants.



Pending APHA Submission: Partnership with Youth Homeless Shelter

"Health and Healing for the Unhoused Population: Using Dialogue to Build Trust, Understanding, and Community"



Medical Humanities Research Day: A Review of Relationship-Based Care

Student-led interventions for survivors of domestic abuse and violence, as well as medical system barriers and navigation

Justice through **EDUCATION**



At Boston College Coalition for the Homeless, we believe that justice starts with education. It is our aim that Boston College students graduate with the mission to create equitable systems and practices, whether they be healthcare professionals, legislatures, business people, or educators. Everyone plays a role in achieving housing and healthcare justice.

To this end, every year we facilitate several educational programs relating to the causes of homelessness, homeless services, and changes needed at the institutional level. We have engaged thousands of students to date across the city.



Fall Program: A Panel Event on Equitable Medical Care

This fall, Boston College Coalition for the Homeless hosted a panel discussion featuring Dr. Jim O'Connell (Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program, President), Melissa Hector (Boston Public Health Commission, Director of Equitable and Strategic Initiatives), and Kaite Hayward (Americorps). Dr. Jim O'Connell is President and Founder of Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program. He is the author of "Stories from the Shadows" and the subject of Tracy Kidder's "Rough Sleepers". The event saw great attendance and deeply engaged the BC community. Students stayed after to get their books signed by Dr. O'Connell, who was extremely generous with his time and knowledge.



Spring Programming: Stories from the Shelter

Spring programming featured a fundraiser and speaker event titled Stories from the Shelter. Speakers included several student leaders, as well as Nancy Armstrong from Women's Lunch Place. The event drew a large audience and featured a silent auction with over 40 local business donations, raising thousands of dollars. In addition, our team interviewed nearly 20 unhoused youth about healthcare and social conditions, which we presented through a publication and posters designed by Kate Bishop. We are deeply grateful to our partner organizations, the Gabelli Presidential Scholars Program, and especially the unhoused individuals who generously shared their stories.

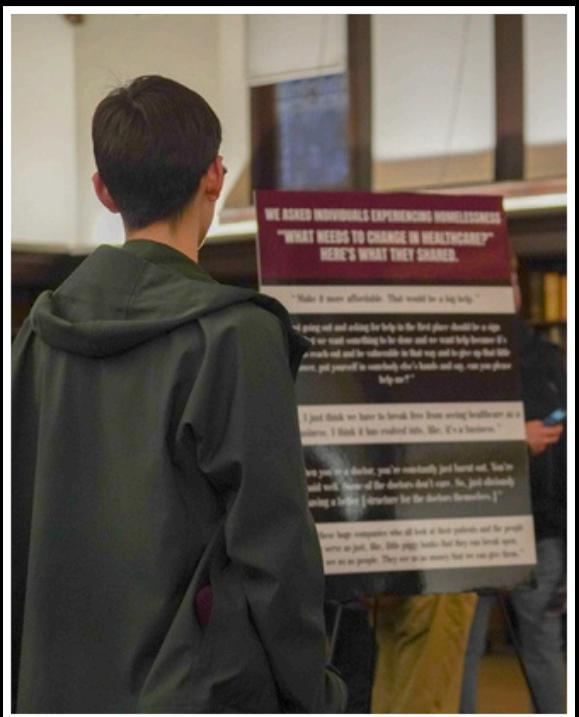


STORIES FROM THE SHELTER PROJECT



“My goal was for anyone who saw the displays to be drawn in by the artwork but to leave with a sense of admiration for the incredible lives and resilience of these individuals.”

Kate Bishop, Class of 2027



QUOTES FROM OUR PARTICIPANTS

“I'm not asking for help for you to beat me down more. I asked you to help so that we can elevate each other.”

“I like [my therapist] because she didn't pretend to understand exactly. She would be like, “I can't understand what you're going through, but I'm here to listen to you, and I'm here to work things out with you” Which is more respectable than, “I really understand what you're saying. I think I'm going to recommend X, Y, and Z.” What? You have not been there. You have not been in my shoes.”

“There is good management for homelessness, but there's not good housing for homelessness. Once you're homeless, there's a lot of programs and opportunities to manage so that you can get the supplies and necessary stuff that you need, but it's not good to really get you out of homelessness unless you have a second plan.”

“If people want to become doctors and lawyers, know what's going on with the people. Know the problems and figure out how to solve them using your skills to do so. Because you know what you're capable of doing—you know what we're going through. You have to be educated. You think because you go to college, you know everything. It's like, no, you need to go into the streets, too.”

**“You have to know the people you're representing.
You have to know the people you're taking care of.
You have to learn the stories.”**

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

*striving towards housing justice
through city-wide collaborations*



3 Partner Non-profit Organizations



2 Partner Universities

Union Park Pizza, Joe's on Newbury, Serafina Back Bay, Faherty, Candlefish, Tiny Hanger, Lee's Burgers, Village Vinyl and Hi-Fi, The Publick House, Bar Taco, Friendly Toast, Burro Bar, Union Park Pizza, Flatbread, Barcelona Wine Bar, Union Park Pizza, Stoked Pizza, Dirty Water, Patagonia, Boston Marathon Company, Olfactory NYC, Violet Spa Facial, Club Pilates, Custom Cakes, Seasons 52, XOXO Sushi, Revolve Consignment, Farmstead Table, Trident Booksellers, Carla Shaw Earrings, Cotopaxi, J Crew, Rag & Bone, Veronica Beard, Gorjana

30+ contributing for-profit companies

LEADERSHIP TEAM



Catherine May is a Junior and Gabelli Presidential Scholar at Boston College, studying Neuroscience. She has over 1,000 hours of clinical experience and has held multiple positions in development within the non-profit space. She also has experience in laboratory research and financial analysis. For the past year, Catherine has worked at the BC Foot Clinic and has presented our progress at the American Public Health Association's National Conference. Catherine leads operations and research for BC Coalition for the Homeless.



Grace Snell is a Gabelli Presidential Scholar at Boston College, double-majoring in Islamic Studies and Philosophy. Grace is also the Editor-in-Cheif of Al Noor, a prominent undergraduate research journal at BC. She has worked at the BC Foot Clinic for the past year, and Grace leads development and advocacy initiatives for Boston College Coalition for the Homeless.



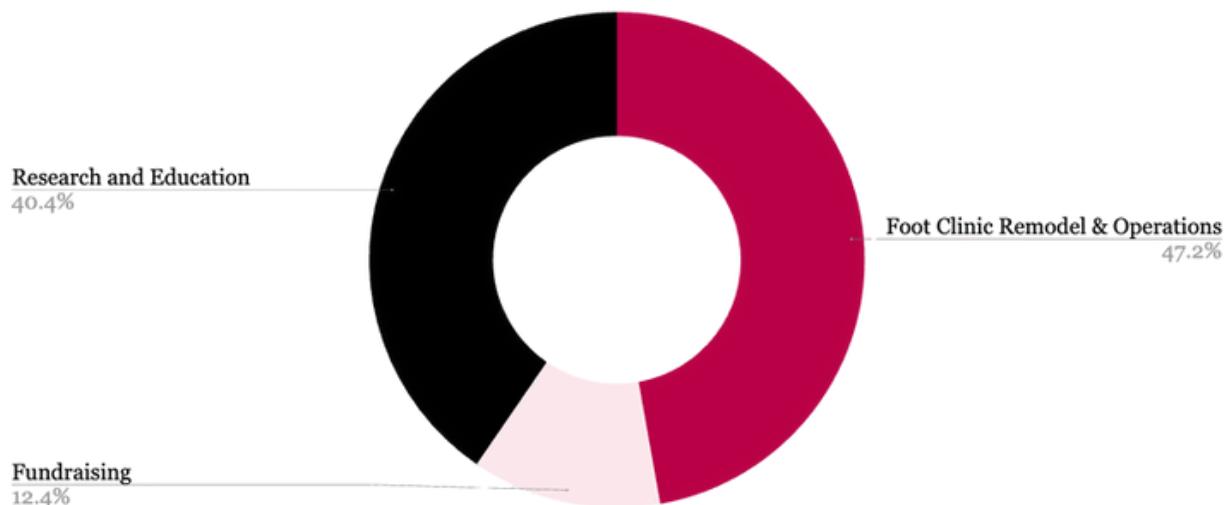
Aalok Bhattacharya is a Gabelli Presidential Scholar at Boston College, studying Biology and German. He has worked with unhoused individuals in the non-profit space, conducted extensive wet lab and computational research, and held leadership roles in both for-profit and mission-driven organizations. He is committed to creating opportunities for future healthcare professionals to engage in frontline service today and prepare to tackle the healthcare disparities of tomorrow. At BC Coalition for the Homeless, Aalok leads fundraising and research.

FINANCIALS

Consolidated Statement of Activities

Raised Funds	Academic Year 2024/2025
Grants	\$2,000
Individual Donations	\$2,533
Fall Fundraising Campaign	\$7,192
Spring Fundraising Campaign	\$10,138
Total Raised Funds	\$21,863
Expenses	
Foot Clinic Medical Supplies	\$3,152
Foot Clinic Infrastructure (Sink, Cabinets)	\$2,321
Fundraising	\$1,437
Public Health Research	\$3,106
Bridge Over Troubled Waters Guests	\$775
Publication	\$806
Total Expenses	\$11,598
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$10,264
Net Assets Beginning of Year	\$0
Net Assets End of Year	\$10,264

Expense Breakdown



NEXT STEPS

Clinic Integration and Expansion

With the success of the BC Foot Clinic at Women's Lunch Place, we will continue our work with the shelter and organizations at Boston College to make the BC Foot Clinic a permanent fixture for homeless women in Boston. We plan to work with other shelters in the Boston area to make the foot clinic model available to the rest of the unhoused population in Boston, and collaborate with student groups at other colleges in the region to create an inter-university effort. We look forward to presenting our work so far to the American Public Health Association and discussing how this model can be adapted for use in other cities across the country.

Conducting Further Research

We will build on our work on the *Stories from the Shelter* collection and at the BC Foot Clinic to execute quantitative and qualitative studies. We are particularly interested in addressing questions about the specific benefits of foot clinics and extracting insights from the experiences of unhoused individuals with healthcare to continue designing and implementing improved strategies and techniques for delivering treatment to this population. We are also interested in understanding how macro-level policies surrounding housing affordability and employment affect homelessness and what adjustments can be made to allow homeless individuals to regain steady lives and housing stability.

New Services

We look forward to working with unhoused individuals to discuss gaps in basic supportive services and design solutions. This might involve creating new services, such as a career closet where youth experiencing homelessness can access professional clothing for use in job interviews, collaborating with existing services to reduce barriers to access, or simply connecting individuals with existing, easily available solutions to the problems unhoused individuals face.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED



Volunteer



Donate



Join our Team

To get involved, please contact

Catherine May:

maycl@bc.edu

(720) - 717 - 2161

