



# nerej

## **Heading Home Housewarming event raises over \$600,000 to combat family homelessness in Boston**

May 25, 2011 - Front Section

Heading Home, Inc., one of the area's largest non-profits devoted to helping the homeless, held its annual Housewarming event and raised over \$600,000 to support programs to end family homelessness. A non-profit organization, Heading Home's mission is to end homelessness in the city by providing housing in conjunction with effective support services to help change the conditions that create homelessness.

The Housewarming event, held May 5th at The State Room, is Heading Home's largest annual fundraising event. This year's event united Greater Boston's finest chefs and restaurants with local business leaders and philanthropists for an evening of networking and fundraising to benefit Heading Home. Twenty restaurants participated in the event, offering tastings of their signature dishes for over 650 attendees to enjoy. A live auction featuring the chance to be an extra in the Mark Wahlberg movie to be filmed in Boston this summer, front row Red Sox/Yankee tickets, and a star chef's catered dinner for ten, among other prizes, raised \$60,000 and provided a lively bidding battle for the evening.

A proud and heartfelt moment was shared when 14-year-old Manuel, once-homeless, spoke about his family's struggle and how Heading Home provided his family with the tools they needed to achieve self-sufficiency and thrive, and remain permanently housed. In closing, Manuel articulated his feelings of profound gratitude: "For me, Heading Home means seeing my mom smile again, and this makes me happy."

The event has a long tradition of strong, passionate leadership by supporters who understand the issue of homelessness in Greater Boston and are willing to engage the community at large. This year, Robert Beal of The Beal Companies, LLP and Robert Griffin of Cushman & Wakefield chaired the Housewarming event, and Chris Schlesinger, owner and chef of the East Coast Grill & Raw Bar, served as restaurant chair. With their passion for the cause of ending homelessness in Greater Boston, Heading Home surpassed its goal and raised more than \$600,000.

"Heading Home relies on the generosity of its committed supporters to raise the funds needed to help individuals and families end the homelessness cycle," said Tom Lorello, executive director of Heading Home. "We are immensely grateful to our dedicated event chairs Robert Beal and Robert Griffin and restaurant chair Chris Schlesinger for their unwavering support of Heading Home, as well as to our committed sponsors and generous restaurant partners who made our Housewarming event a tremendous success."

Many generous supporters made the 2011 Housewarming Gala possible, including \$25,000-level underwriters Adage Capital Management, L.P., Cushman & Wakefield, The Davis Companies, and Granite Telecommunications. Sponsors at the \$10,000-level include The Beal Companies, LLP, CB Richard Ellis, Charles River Realty Investors, LLC, Equity Office Properties, John & Mary Fowler,

Ginsberg/Kaplan Foundation, Gary & Jill Hatton, Sherry & Alan Leventhal, Margulies Perruzzi Architects, Miller & Favazzo Properties, Inc., Pyramid Advisors, STAG Industrial, Inc., TIAA-CREF, SITQ, Frank & Paula Zavrl.

Participating restaurants included Baker's Best, Bistro du Midi, DeuxAve, East Coast Grill, Eastern Standard, The Fireplace, Food Truck Nation, Green Street Grill, Grill 23 & Bar, Highland Kitchen, Kickass Cupcakes, Lord Hobo, Moo, Pinkberry, Post 390, Rialto, Sel de la Terre, Spiga Restaurant, Stella, Sweet, and The State Room.

The perilous housing market and wave of foreclosures have displaced many people, and the issue of homelessness has become absolutely critical in the Greater Boston community. On any given night, there are more than 7,000 homeless people in Greater Boston, and the average age of a homeless person - and Heading Home client - is just eight years old. Sadly, not since the Great Depression have so many families been homeless. The number of homeless families is staggering and offers a glimpse into the depth of the affordable housing conundrum. In 2010, Heading Home helped more than 2,000 homeless families and individuals in Greater Boston by providing them a place to call home and opportunities for self-sufficiency.

#### About Heading Home

Heading Home, formerly Shelter Inc., is a non-profit whose mission is to end homelessness in Greater Boston by providing housing in conjunction with effective support services to help change the conditions that create homelessness. Founded in 1974 by a small group of concerned citizens in Cambridge, Heading Home today operates programs focused on smaller home-like settings with individualized attention in the communities of Boston, Somerville, Cambridge, Malden, Medford, Everett and Quincy.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540