

Lives Are Meant
To Be Changed



2025 Impact Report

Driving health, wellness, and prosperity
for men of color returning from incarceration
and their families

(857) 230-7058 | www.livesaremeanttobechanged.org

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER & DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Looking back at 2025, I have to honor the journey that got us here. Lives Are Meant To Be Changed was born out of this community, my own path, and a belief that we all deserve the chance – and help – to grow.

One thing that is central to Lives is that we meet people where they are. We know that everyone doesn't grow at the same time. I remember where I was during some of my lowest lows, and I remember that when I asked for help people didn't know how to help me. We see the same need today in so many others in reentry and recovery, and out of this need comes the driving force behind Lives Are Meant To Be Changed. This team has been there, knows what it means to go through those challenges, and shows up to walk with you as you figure out what you need next and how to pursue it.

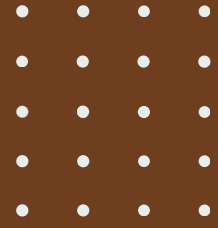
We are building our vision: for a Boston where people and families impacted by incarceration and addiction are supported, connected, and rooted in hope.



— Garrick Thames
Founder & Executive Director



OUR MISSION



Mission: To empower men of color who are returning from a period of incarceration. These men are facing the challenges of substance abuse, mental health issues, and societal reintegration. We support them by providing access to essential services and resources to aid their journey towards self-sufficiency and well-being.

Lives are Meant to be Changed

An illustration of two hands, one dark-skinned and one light-skinned, holding each other in a supportive grip. The hands are positioned within a white arched frame. The text "Lives are Meant to be Changed" is written in a white, handwritten-style font around the frame.



135+

people reached

AT A GLANCE

Over 135 unique individuals reached through:

16

facilitation days

- Two 8-week cohort series
- Three community outreach and resource events

2,665

items distributed

- Clothing, shoes, toiletries, and other essentials provided through Lives' partners

14

local partners

- Ongoing referrals and coaching for individuals, at time of release and throughout their transition

SUPPORTEDSUPPORT
TEDSUPPORTEDSUP
PORTEDSUPPORTED



PROGRAM SERVICES

- **Cohort Series:** Lives' custom groups for men of color on Fatherhood in Recovery and Health & Wellness; run in partnership with local agencies and city offices.
- **Resource Advocacy:** Both via the cohort experience and for separate individual referrals. This may mean helping someone complete a housing application, supporting them in navigating services, or accompanying them to a resource agency or court date.
- **Substance Abuse Coaching:** In concert with various local addiction recovery resources, Lives provides personalized support for individuals at all stages of their recovery journey.
- **Education Program:** Lives helps members strengthen their futures through access to educational resources, including GED preparation, job readiness training, and communication skills workshops.
- **Outreach Initiatives:** Key to the vision for a Boston region lifted by transformation and hope, Lives conducts outreach to connect with the community and spread awareness about available support and resources.



GROUPS, COHORTS & EVENTS

This year saw successful cycles of Lives' custom cohort & group offerings, **Fathers in Recovery** and **Fathers Standing in the Gap**.



At the close of the year, after partnering with Out For Good, Inc. to deliver pre-release groups, Lives took the lead on facilitation of a weekly **Reentry Group** inside **South Bay House of Correction**.

Lives held dynamic community outreach and resource events: a **Recovery Day** in February at the Roxbury Branch of the Boston Public Library, a **Thanksgiving Turkey & Meal Drive** at STEPRox Recovery in November, and a **Holiday Party & Resource Fair** in December.



IMPACT FOR INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

- The Lives team picked up dozens of participants at the time of their release, **welcoming them** with a backpack of personal essentials, transportation to receive a meal and haircut, and then accompaniment to the Office of Returning Citizens to access resources to support their reentry.
- Lives assisted many of these returning community members in **acquiring identification and other documents** needed for successful reentry.
- 13 Lives participants **secured housing**, in partnership with the Office of Returning Citizens and St. Francis House.



IMPACT FOR INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

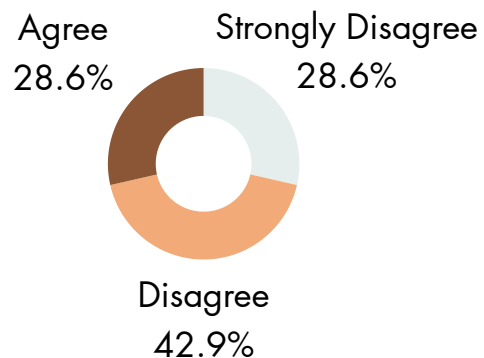
“We have two lives, and the second one begins when we realize we only have one.”
-Lives Member and Community Leader

Lives’ services connect reentry, recovery, parenthood, essential needs, and more. This comprehensive approach means Lives is positioned to support each individual along their unique growth journey.

As such, Lives’ cohort series impact the adults who participate *and* their families. Past participants report:

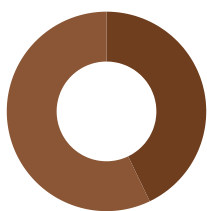
- Before **Fathers in Recovery**.

My children can count on me when I'm using.



- After **Fathers in Recovery**.

Agree
57.1%



Strongly Agree
42.9%

My family can count on me today.

“God woke me up and got me up!”
-Lives Member and Community Leader

CONNECTED

PARTNERS & CONTRIBUTORS

Deep gratitude to Lives' community and civic partners:

City of Boston
 Family Nurturing Center
 Frugal's Book Store
 Life After Prison
 Motivated by Math
 New Life Furniture Bank
 Out For Good, Inc.
 STEPRox Recovery Center

Suffolk House of Correction
 TD Bank Volunteer Program
 The Church of Jesus Christ
 of Latter-Day Saints
 Union Capital Boston
 United Church of Christ,
 Medfield
 Wilahmena's Place



STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

3

In 2025, Lives welcomed new volunteers, and saw three key contributors move from volunteer to staff positions.

This year's impact would not be possible without their efforts:

Volunteers & Interns

Susan Holbrook
Julia Nardelli
Ella Thompson

Staff

Anthony DePrimeo
Cornelius Hood
Sandra Abernathy Thames



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michiko Andrade
Fred Bernabe
Richard Claytor, *Vice Chair*
John D. Rogol, *Treasurer*
Desiree Simmons
Lisa S. Thompson, *Chair*

This year, Lives was pleased to welcome:



Richard Claytor as Vice Chair.

Richard recently retired as Director of Programs at the Family Nurturing Center of Massachusetts. He brings more than 35 years of experience spanning nonprofit, public, and intergovernmental sectors, with deep expertise in community action, social planning, and fatherhood and family initiatives.



John Rogol as Board Treasurer.

John is a senior finance executive and CPA who has served as a divisional CFO for most of his career in financial services, supporting divisions ranging from sales, wealth management, marketing, client services, technology and procurement. John currently consults with several non-profits through his firm, Admiralty Business Services.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

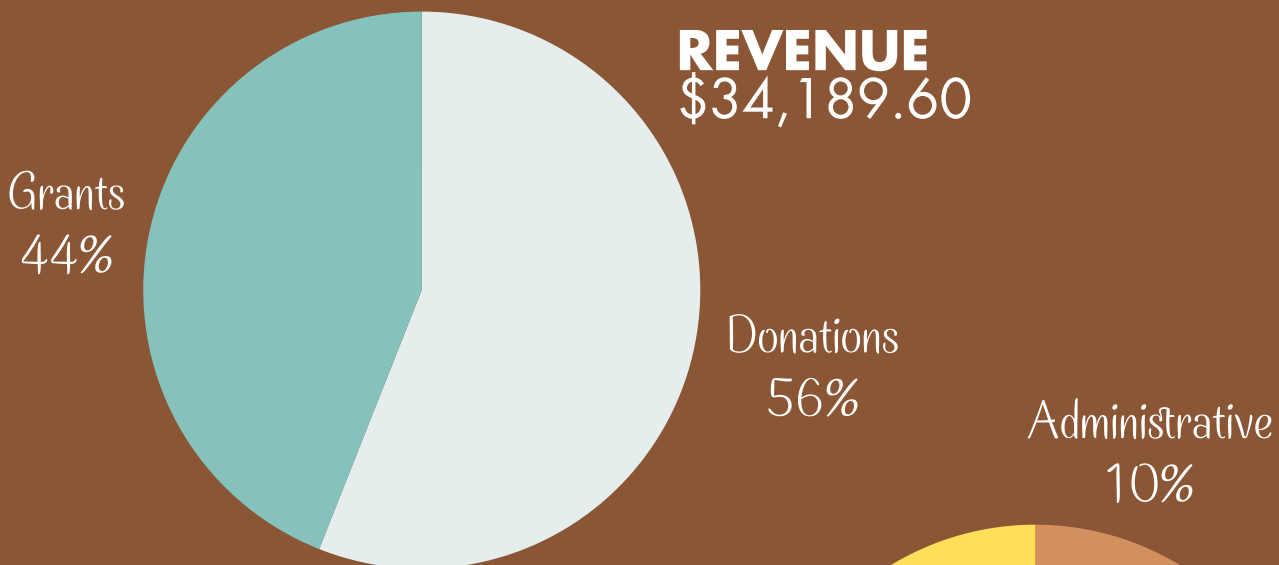
- **2025 Revenue Sources:**

- Total Revenue: \$34,189.60
- 56% donations, 44% grants
- *2025 funders include the City of Boston Office of Returning Citizens, Office of Black Male Advancement, and Lenny Zakim Fund*

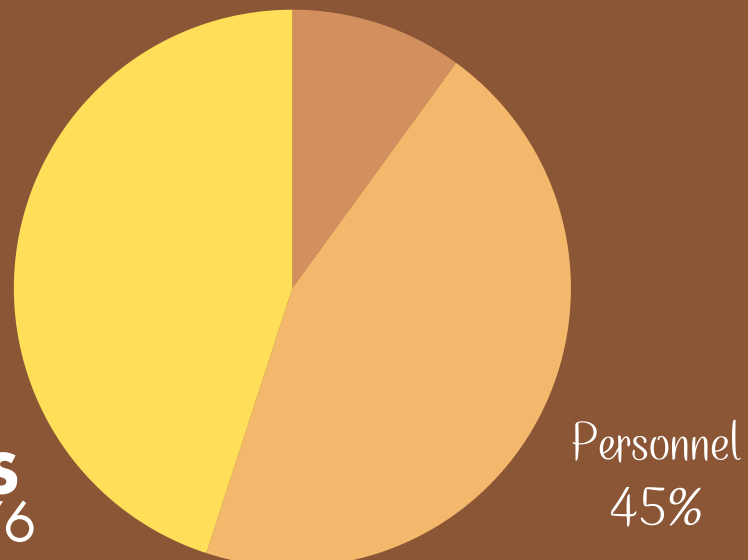
- **2025 Expense Categories:**

- Total Expenses: \$34,412.76
- 45% personnel, 45% programs, 10% administrative

REVENUE \$34,189.60



EXPENSES \$34,412.76



LOOKING AHEAD TO CY 2026

- Expansion to **two weekly groups inside** South Bay House of Correction
- **New on-site groups launched** with Shattuck Hospital and Victory House
- High-impact **partnership created** with New Life Furniture Bank, furnishing multiple participant apartments
- **Ongoing services** for individual coaching, community groups and cohorts, & outreach events
- **Expanding for holistic support to families**, with a focus on relationships and support networks, and referrals for women in reentry
- Implementation of **administrative and fiscal plans** as identified through 2025 systems assessment
- Completion of Lives' first **strategic planning** process

ROOTED
IN HOPE



Join Us

We are stronger and healthier walking together. To find support services, inquire about volunteer or partnership opportunities, or [make a donation](#) in support of Boston's families and our work, please reach the Lives team at the details below.

Supported • Connected • Rooted in Hope



Boston, Massachusetts

501(c)3 EIN: 93-3596241

www.livesaremeanttobechanged.org

@lives2bechanged

Reach us: (857) 230-7058

livesaremeanttobechanged@gmail.com

Support the work: Text SUPPORTLIVES
to 53-555 or [give online](#).

