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Fundraising Results Mixed, But Likely Improving after Bombings

May 13, 2013 — Nonprofit fundraising by Boston area nonprofits seems to be recovering from the dip that followed a massive outpouring of support for victims of the Marathon bombings last month, with one walking event beating its goal by 30%, another falling short of its target by 17%, due in part to a forecast of rain, and a third indoor event nearly reaching its goal.



The **Louis D. Brown Peace Institute**, a nonprofit based in the Dorchester section of Boston that works with the families of violence victims and offenders to improve community harmony, raised \$130,000 via its annual Mother's Day Walk for Peace, beating its fundraising goal by 30%.

Yesterday's 17th annual Mother's Day Walk for Peace, which drew double the 5,000 walkers expected on the 3.6 mile route through Dorchester that started and ended at Town Field Park, surpassed the event's previous fundraising record of \$78,000.

Agnes Portalewska, the Walk's coordinator, said that the high profile nature of recent violent events, including the school shooting in Newtown, Conn., last December, and the Marathon bombings, highlighted awareness of the need to counter violence, bolstering support for the Walk. "Violence is an ongoing problem everywhere, and in certain neighborhoods it happens every day," she said. "People realize that none of us are immune."

In addition, she said, extensive pre-event publicity, including walkers getting coverage in their local newspapers, helped boost turnout.

Participants joined the Walk from across Massachusetts and New England, with strong support coming from a number of churches, temples, and other religious communities. Sponsors included The Gardner Howland Shaw Foundation, The Boston Foundation, and the Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation.

Registration was free and while participants set their personal fundraising goals, the walk's organizers asked each walker to pledge at least \$100.

NAMI Mass Raises \$500,000 in Annual Walk, Short of Goal



The **National Alliance on Mental Illness of Massachusetts** (NAMI Mass), a Woburn-based nonprofit that seeks to improve the quality of life for people with mental illnesses and for their families, said its 10th annual NAMIWalks Massachusetts, held this past Saturday, will likely raise \$500,000, about 17% off its \$600,000 goal.

"Everyone's attention was diverted to the One Fund Boston, and rightfully so," said Karen Gromis, manager of the walk that attracted 2,500 walkers who hiked three miles from Artesani Park on Soldiers Field Road in Boston, through Cambridge, and back to the starting point.

Gromis said a forecast for rain may have also diminished the turnout, especially on-day registrations, as attendance at 5,000 was down from last year's 7,000.

Last year's walk raised \$522,000 from a similar number of walkers.

This year's projected fundraising total marks the first year-to-year decline since 2009, Gromis said.

Since 2004, NAMI Mass has raised \$3 million through its annual Walk, and has funneled that money directly into programs and services.

DOVE Raises \$34,000 via Annual Divas Dance





DOVE, Inc. (Domestic Violence Ended), a Quincy-based nonprofit that provides preventive and responsive services to combat domestic violence, raised \$34,000 at its third annual Divas Dance, held April 30.

The event, held at the Granite Links Golf Club in Quincy, drew 250 women and nearly reached its fundraising goal of \$35,000, despite the loss of a significant corporate sponsor from last year.

"We grew our donor base and incorporated a new media sponsor level," said Claudia Cuscianna, senior development and communications manager for DOVE.

She added, "We were nervous at first after the Marathon, but then saw an increase in the number of people signing up as we got closer to the date of the event. There were also a lot of walk-ins."

Cuscianna said that being an indoor event south of Boston likely meant that the Marathon bombing had less impact on DOVE's fundraiser: "If anything, it brought people closer together."

WalkBoston Surpasses Marathon Fundraising Goal



WalkBoston, a Boston nonprofit that promotes walking for transportation and recreation, reported that its Boston Marathon team raised \$31,000, surpassing its \$30,000 goal, to support its ongoing programs.

Helping it reach its total was a \$2,000 gift from an anonymous donor, who reached out after the bombing.