Patricia always dreamed of owning her own home—and recently that dream became a reality. She and her grandson moved into a beautiful two-bedroom home in Mattapan, which feels like a world away from their previous home in Roxbury’s Whittier Street Housing Development.

Since 2016, EMPath has been providing its Mobility Mentoring® services to residents of the public housing development, including Patricia, who had lived there for a long time.

“Before EMPath came along I always thought it was me on this journey all by myself,” she says. “I knew I needed more support.” With guidance from her mentor, Patricia began to plan for the future she wanted. At the top of the list: a new home for her and her grandson.

Patricia got to work, enrolling in a home-buying class and checking off financial boxes in order to qualify for a mortgage. “The whole team has been my rock, my anchor. I have been able to accomplish so much with them, feeling like they’re on my side.”

Recently—after months of focus, hard work, and determination—Patricia purchased her own home and is all moved in.

Elisabeth Babcock, EMPath President & CEO, says that while crucial that more affordable housing be built, “it isn’t the units alone that make it happen, it’s this kind of personal coaching through the steps it takes to change people’s lives.”

Patricia’s grandson loves his new bedroom, where every day he practices slam dunks on a mini basketball hoop. He even played one-on-one with Boston Mayor Marty Walsh when the mayor dropped by the housewarming celebration.
Babcock visits the Netherlands

Currently, EMPath’s Mobility Mentoring® approach is being used by municipalities and non-profits across the Netherlands to boost economic mobility. Recently, President & CEO Elisabeth Babcock addressed the annual Mobility Mentoring Congress in Utrecht.

The conference was a huge hit, drawing top academics and the nation’s chief of human services. Babcock also met with municipal officials from the largest cities in the country on how they can adapt Mobility Mentoring locally to lessen economic disparities.

Afterwards, attendees of the Congress described Babcock’s keynote address as “empowering, inspiring, and sharp as a knife.”

The Dutch Exchange members will be in attendance October 31 - November 1 at the Disrupting the Poverty Cycle Conference. See more about the conference on page 7.

Economic Mobility Exchange™ Serves 100+ Members

The Economic Mobility Exchange—EMPath’s global network to fight poverty—reached a milestone. The network now serves more than 100 member organizations in 28 states and five countries, and counting! Jennifer Lowe, Vice President of Shared Learning & Member Networks, says that EMPath “could not ask for better partners to disrupt poverty and help create a bright future for families worldwide.”
Why I Donate to EMPath

In the late ’90s, business executive Pam Murray joined the Board of The Women’s Education and Industrial Union (WEIU), a historic economic empowerment organization based in Boston. She believed strongly in its mission of helping women achieve economic independence and soon became Board Chair.

Pam focused on revamping programs to better serve low-income participants. She made progress, but thought that with the right partners the work could be done even better. In 2006, WEIU merged with Crittenton, Inc.—another Boston nonprofit for low-income women—to become Crittenton Women’s Union. The organization would be re-named in 2015 to EMPath to reflect its commitment to innovation.

Pam is a big believer in EMPath’s Mobility Mentoring® model and is “constantly inspired” by the amazing accomplishments of participants. She is a proud supporter of EMPath to this day.

Do you have a story to share? The Department of Institutional Advancement is collecting stories of participants and donors to illustrate EMPath’s mission at work. To share your story, email Ana Zepeda at azepeda@empathways.org.

Setting Goals and Making Progress

Congratulations to three of our participants who made big strides in just the last 90 days.

Chelsea was accepted into a competitive job training program. James was accepted into a pre-college program. Karla advocated for and received a raise at her place of employment.

Names were changed to protect the privacy of participants.
EMPath families attend the Back to School BBQ.
EMPath responds to the latest poverty numbers

In September, the U.S. Census Bureau released the latest federal poverty statistics. The report showed that the decline in the national poverty rate from 2016 to 2017 was 0.4%—but the marginal decrease was not statistically significant.

Nicki Ruiz de Luzuriaga, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, offered remarks to put in context the latest poverty numbers:

“The ultimate goal of low-income families is to get substantially closer to the middle class.

“For the families who in 2017 did make it above the poverty line, their monthly income may still translate to less than $2,100 per month. On that income, childcare; housing; and health care remain out of reach.

“Families just above the poverty line are often no more financially secure than families just below it. Both are still an illness or a layoff away from financial ruin.

“The clock is ticking. The stress, anxiety, and social isolation of poverty can have serious and long-lasting consequences. This further complicates the path to economic mobility for families trapped in poverty.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting EMPath Household Income</th>
<th>2017 National Poverty Threshold</th>
<th>Current EMPath Household Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$18,037</td>
<td>$19,479</td>
<td>$31,179*</td>
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* All numbers are based on an average household size of 1 parent and 2 children.
*EMPath earnings figures are averages for those participants active in 2017 in the flagship program (CFO) at program start, with an average of 2.3 years in the program.
*Average earnings for CFO graduates (CFO is a 5-year program) are higher.
EMPath Hosts HUBweek Panel on Affordable Housing

The need for affordable housing is an urgent issue in Greater Boston. To delve into the complexities of the problem, EMPath convened an expert panel to discuss how to make sure more people have access to affordable housing and how to use it as a springboard to economic mobility.

Questions centered on the challenges for families who live in affordable housing, how to best allocate resources, how to remove the stigma around affordable housing, and how to ensure public housing and the surrounding community are integrated.

(Left to Right) Judy Parks, Vice President of Programs, Economic Mobility Pathways; Patricia Brown, Former Resident, Whittier Public Housing Development; Josh Cohen, Development Director, Beacon Communities; Kenzie Bok, Senior Policy Advisor, Boston Housing Authority; Patricia Belden, President of Preservation of Affordable Housing; Trevor Samios, Vice President of Resident Services, WinnCompanies

“It’s figuring out what matters to people; rather than counting what is the matter with people. We’re working on listening better.”

- Patricia Belden
President, Preservation of Affordable Housing
Save your seat at the table. Register at disruptingpovertyconference.org.
JOIN EMPATH

Join researchers, policymakers, program leaders, renowned experts, and low-income families to advance solutions to a complex problem: How do we best support low-income families to secure a place in the middle class and beyond?

Register at disruptingpovertyconference.org

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Crittendon Women’s Union is now EMPATH!

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