Dear Friends of JRI,

In social work, providers often unwittingly adopt a bias toward a medical model of disease, leading us to define people by their deficits (we say “diagnosis”). And it is important to be able to identify concrete barriers to individual happiness. But there is a countervailing message that social workers are trained to embrace: Focus on strengths, since these are the most likely path forward. One of the key strengths that we can reinforce is resilience—that ability to bounce back and move forward even in the face of complex trauma.

We serve so many individuals who have experienced so much adversity in such a short space of time, and we see them strive and overcome through the trauma-informed approach and the open hearts that we bring to our work. Here are a few examples that I have seen this past year:

• An unaccompanied, homeless high school student from Youth Harbors was accepted to George Town University on a scholarship.
• Students at our residential programs take some first steps to overcome a history of abuse and neglect through our Trauma Sensitive Yoga program developed by the Trauma Center, reclaiming greater control of their bodies and lives.
• We have made ourselves available—by hiring and training former victims of trafficking as counselors and mentors—to teen victims of human trafficking, helping them to choose a path out of “The Life” and reuniting them with their friends and family.
• We employ many staff members with lived experience which informs their work. Having access to staff with lived experience is a particularly critical thing for LGBTQ+ teens to find their place in the world. Seeing how others have found their way can make a huge difference for youth in identifying and moving toward a more empowered, independent, and affirmative experience.
• We have stepped in to help during the state and national opioid crisis by finding loving foster homes for infants, toddlers, and older children whose parents became unable to care for them due to addiction.
• We have supported artists, uncovering the strengths and skills that were present but not recognized, through our Full Circle ARTS stores, where individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities create artistic wonders sold to the public, all from recycled goods.

These are all examples of resilience and social justice. And that goes to the core of our mission—to work in partnership with individuals, families, communities, and government to pursue the social justice inherent in opening doors to opportunity and independence.

We have also expanded our reach and depth, recruiting, hiring and promoting an increasingly diverse group of leaders. As our organization has expanded its territory outward, developing new programs and services in Connecticut, Southeastern Mass., Cape Cod, and the North Shore, we have also ramped up our efforts in the Roxbury, Mattapan, and Dorchester neighborhoods of Boston. Trauma and adversity know no geography, and we strive to be the best-in-class provider of trauma-informed care, one that brings the latest innovations and advances—coupled with caring and commitment—to those in need.

Even as we have accomplished much and progressed far, we cannot turn our attention away from the fact that many of the injustices and instances of trauma and violence we encounter have their roots in the long and tragic history of racism, as well as a culture that has historically looked away from sexual violence toward women. We are committed to acknowledging the truth of the stories our clients tell us, and to becoming an even more diverse and welcoming agency.

We thank our friends, our partners, and most of all the individuals, families, and communities who have welcomed us into their lives.

Andy Pond
JRI President
Since 1837, Children’s Friend and Family Services (CFFS) has committed itself to a sustainable, long term vision of creating and cultivating a community of loving, caring, capable families. Throughout the years, Children’s Friend has helped touch generations of families by providing programs that make better parents, mend relationships, foster independence, build resiliency and clear the roadblocks towards stable and productive lives. CFFS merged with JRI in January of 2017. Children’s Friend began by serving Salem, and has expanded to become one of the premier providers serving communities north of Boston. JRI, while “younger” (founded in 1973), is the most programmatically diverse nonprofit in the region, with a special emphasis on trauma-informed care. Our agencies share a deep commitment to serving children and families in need of support. Both agencies take an approach to treatment that is client-focused and tailored to fit each individual, family, and community.

JRI and CFFS share a passion for service and a commitment to excellence. We’ve identified commonalities as well as different strengths—which means that each will learn from the other. CFFS continues to provide its widely recognized, top quality children’s behavioral health services. JRI has a strong capacity to support CFFS, as it operates the same services in Boston and in Southeastern Massachusetts. CFFS staff have access to the unparalleled benefits, training, and support that JRI offers. CFFS continues to be stronger, more resilient, and better able to respond to the ever-changing environment of human services.

Children’s Friend and Family Services and JRI share a deep commitment to serving children and families in need of support. Both agencies help to provide programs that make better parents, mend relationships, foster independence, and clear the roadblocks towards stable and productive lives. When families are strong, communities thrive.
YOUTHHARBORS

YouthHarbors, a program of JRI held a ceremony at the Boston Public Library to mark the graduation of 30 public high school students who were formerly homeless or at risk of homelessness. YouthHarbors partners with six Eastern Massachusetts high schools to provide students with support in the areas of housing, education, employment, health, and independent living skills development so that each can focus on completing his or her education rather than being overwhelmed by their personal circumstances.

The students are graduated from Boston Day and Evening Academy (Roxbury), Everett High School, Jeremiah E. Burke High School (Dorchester), Lowell High School, Malden High School, and Somerville High School.

“These graduates have demonstrated a tremendous amount of perseverance in the face of adversity and today we celebrate their success,” said David Dorvilier, Program Director of YouthHarbors. “Most high school students in Massachusetts do not have to worry about where their next meal will come from or on what bed they will be sleeping that night. These students were faced with all of that worry and more, and their communities, schools, and our program staff are all immensely proud.”

One of the graduates this year was Kacey, who last winter, in her senior year, found herself forced to leave her home. A referral to YouthHarbors was made shortly thereafter. “I am so thankful to everyone at the YouthHarbors program,” Kacey said. “They have been a great support system to me when I needed one most, and have helped me achieve my dreams of graduating high school and going to college.”

Kacey is graduating from Everett High School with straight A’s and a full scholarship to attend Reed College in Oregon this fall. Kacey and the other 29 graduates give new meaning to resiliency.

According to a 2014 report from America’s Promise Alliance, only 13% of homeless high school students are likely to stay in school and graduate, however, 97% of homeless high school students in the YouthHarbors program either graduated or are on track to graduate.

“No matter how hard it gets, no matter how many people say you can’t do it, no matter how many times you doubt yourself or think you’re not capable, Keep trying!”

- Malden Graduate
EDWARD M. POWELL NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF JRI’S STRIVE BOSTON

Edward M. Powell was named Executive Director of JRI’s STRIVE Boston program. Powell will continue to serve as JRI’s Vice President for Community Engagement.

STRIVE Boston serves chronically unemployed adults of all ages who come from the most underserved communities to help them realize their potential to find and keep jobs that promise sustainable livelihoods and personal growth. STRIVE Boston also operates a job-readiness program, STRIVE FORWARD Juvenile Justice Initiative, to recruit and enroll at-risk young adults, ages 16 to 24, providing them with workforce development training and an array of necessary services that they may not otherwise know about.

“Ed will bring passion, commitment, and an abundance of experience and personal relationships to his new role at STRIVE Boston,” said Andy Pond, President and CEO of JRI. “He is a believer in the abilities of the individuals served by STRIVE Boston and he seeks to nurture success through job training, education, or learning a trade.”

“I’m excited to be the new Executive Director of STRIVE Boston and use my experience as JRI’s Vice President of Community Engagement to build the necessary relationships with community partners that will enable us to offer a wide scope of services to the individuals we serve,” said Powell.

STRIVE Boston is one of more than 20 STRIVE International affiliates working to help people acquire the life-changing skills and attitudes needed to overcome challenging circumstances, find sustained employment, and become valuable contributors to their families, their employers and their communities.

STRIVE® PREPARED TO WORK DETERMINED TO SUCCEED

EDWARD M. POWELL
Executive Director
STRIVE Boston

JRI HEATH HOSTED CONFERENCE ON HEALTH DISPARITIES AFFECTING LGBTQ+ YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

JRI Health, a division of JRI that provides services to LGBTQ+ youth as well as people living with HIV and AIDS, hosted a conference titled “Beyond the Basics: Advancing Care for LGBTQ+ Youth and Young Adults.” This one-day conference, held in conjunction with JRI’s Institute for Research, Inquiry and Evaluation, featured nationally known speakers and addressed health disparities affecting this population.

The conference included a keynote speech from Dr. Caitlyn Ryan, a clinical social worker who has worked on LGBTQ+ health and mental health issues for nearly 40 years and co-founded the Family Acceptance Project at San Francisco State University in 2002. The closing speaker was Douglas Brooks, who served under President Obama as the Director of the Office of National AIDS Policy.

Beyond the Basics also featured several other presenters including experts in health disparities, racial justice, interfaith communities and the delivery of LGBTQ+ services across a continuum of care.

“TOO MANY LGBTQ+ YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS FACE BARRIERS WHEN IT COMES TO HEALTH CARE.” SAID ANDY POND, PRESIDENT & CEO OF JRI.
JRI EQUINE THERAPY PROGRAM

Complex trauma therapy at a holistic horse-farm for urban youth

In August of 2017, “Equine Facilitated Therapy for Complex Trauma (EFT-CT)” by JRI staff was published in the Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma.

JRI’s Equine Therapy Program provides urban youth, who are between the ages of 8 and 21 and living in underserved communities, access to horses in a holistic horse-farm environment. The program utilizes an ARC-based model of treatment, Equine Facilitated Therapy for Complex Trauma (EFT-CT), developed by JRI in partnership with Bear Spot Foundation.

The EFT-CT model is considered experiential in nature, as it focuses primarily on the relationship with a therapy horse. Experiential models such as EFT-CT are proving more effective interventions for youth who have experienced severe trauma and who are not often responsive to more traditional modalities of treatment, such as talk therapy.

For many of our youth, learning how to trust their horse has promoted themes of competency, control, safety and mastery. Building a trusting relationship with a therapy horse has helped youth navigate relationships in their daily lives. The highly relational nature of the EFT-CT model supports youth in building a positive and cohesive sense of self through direct experience. These experiences can then be applied in the therapeutic process, helping youth to integrate their trauma experiences effectively.

JRI’s Equine Therapy Program is held at Furnace Brook Farm in Marshfield, Massachusetts. The sessions last about an hour and include an established routine tailored to the needs of the youth. The focus is on creating a therapeutic setting and inclusive environment for participants. A number of therapy horses are available for youth. Horses are matched with youth according to physical size, comfort level, temperament and therapeutic goals.

Riding the therapy horse is not necessarily a goal of an EFT-CT session, but sessions do typically include riding. This part of the session is often a powerful and integral piece of the therapeutic work. The clinician/instructor draws on SMART (Sensory Motor Arousal Regulation Treatment) principles to support the participant in experiencing the natural rhythms within the horse’s gait. These rhythms are naturally regulating for riders and can support their ability to gain executive functioning skills.

Prior to engaging in sessions, all participants are made aware of the necessary safety protocols for working with horses. Assessments are completed at the point of referral to determine whether the youth are a positive fit for the program.

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EXPANDING OUR SERVICES
FOR LATENCY-AGE CHILDREN
WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED
SIGNIFICANT TRAUMA

At JRI we have expanded our continuum of services to include two programs serving latency age children. The Little Heroes Home, a group home established in 2016 and Littleton Academy, a residential school established in 2017, provide services to children ages 5-12 who have experienced significant trauma and neglect. Often, these children will co-present with developmental delays, emotional dysregulation, and educational needs. Our primary treatment objectives focus on the development of skills to manage past trauma and/or attachment issues to successfully transition home.

Our services are founded on the belief that children with complex trauma histories, challenging behavior profiles, and disrupted attachments can develop healthy attachments and a positive sense of self when they receive the best evidence-based treatments in a safe and secure environment. Each child deserves a nurturing, positive, home-like living environment that allows them to grow and engage in normal childhood experiences. JRI developed these intensive programs to give children and their parents/caregivers the opportunity and resources they need to develop skill sets, reconnect as a family, and successfully transition to their permanent family/placement setting.

At Little Heroes and Littleton Academy, we make every effort to reflect the cultures of our children in our staffing and our practices. We believe that making the treatment environment supportive and accepting of all cultures is conducive to healing. Programming responds to the unique social, educational, emotional, and clinical needs of latency-aged children. We utilize ARC, a trauma informed model used across JRI, to provide support to children as they transition to relying on a set of internalized skills necessary for long term success. The programs support family connection in an individualized, flexible, supportive way. All staff are trained in family support systems and techniques to help support family relationships. Little Heroes has successfully transitioned several children back to their families.
7 divisions, over 100 programs, 21,352 clients served in 3 states

COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

The SMART Team was pleased to have been awarded a $100,000 match gift this past fiscal year from the Fish Family Foundation to expand the number of transitional homes from 6 to 25 over the next two years. We attained the match and are extremely grateful for the support of the Fish family and the communities we serve.

CONNECTICUT

JRI’s Connecticut Division continues to expand its mission throughout the state of Connecticut in 2017. A new Community Based Services office in Southington was added to address the need for trauma-informed services in the western part of the state. Sean Rose, M.Ed, Executive Director of JRI Connecticut, joined the Children’s League of Connecticut which is a group that informs best practices for youth in the state. Sean was also named to the board of the National Alliance on Mental Illness in Connecticut. He is also on the governmental task force to study the voluntary admissions to the Department of Children and Families which is led by the Connecticut Senate Republican President Pro Tempore Len Fasano. Stacey Forrest, M.Ed, Director of the Susan Wayne Center for Excellence, is working closely with the Office of the Child Advocate as a member of the “Little Kids” Task Force, which is spearheading an initiative to prevent suspension and exclusionary practices with young children in public and private schools.

EDUCATION

The former Littleton Group Home facility was awarded a license by DESE and became Littleton Academy, a campus of the Meadowridge Schools. The Littleton Group Home residents transitioned to other placements in a manner that was supportive and therapeutic, including extending the timetable to allow for students to graduate from school, and all were successfully placed at other JRI programs, reunified with families or placed in other appropriate placements. The property was renovated and transformed from one that was a young adult contemporary home, to what is now a fun and youth-themed environment. An extensive training plan was developed to expose staff to working with a younger population, benefiting from the staff expertise at other JRI school sites.

In October 2016, Southeast Alternative school became Anchor Academy. The school changed its name to better reflect its mission and vision — anchoring its students with the supports they require to successfully achieve their academic, social and emotional goals. With the ARC treatment model as the framework that guides the educational and therapeutic model, Anchor Academy added “anchor-based” vocational opportunities focusing on life skills. Connecting students to local communities and reflecting the nautical theme, Anchor Academy partnered with the New Bedford Community Boating Center to provide students with the opportunity to construct a Bevin Skiff Row Boat from scratch. This hands-on project gave students the opportunity to develop carpentry skills, practice teamwork, and increase their competency and self-esteem. The student contractors, JRI administration, and local political and community leaders celebrated the launch of the newly constructed boat on the docks at the New Bedford Community Boating Center.

Meadowridge Academy strives to make a positive difference in the lives of students who attend the academy. Students are given the opportunity and experiences that they may not ever have outside of Meadowridge Academy. In addition to day trips to NY, Cape Cod and Salem, and single overnight camping trips, a group of students were able to travel to Washington DC for multiple nights with staff. Students were able to see many great landmarks and truly enjoyed the experience.

Meadowridge Academy continues to be a leader in the field of residential work. Due to our highly esteemed reputation, we were able to expand our referral sources throughout New England and beyond. We now serve students from MA, RI, CT, VT, NY, and NJ. We were also certified by NATSAP (National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs) and invited to present at multiple conferences on “Trauma Informed Sensory Based Learning and Regulation” and “Building Better School and Police Relationships to Improve Outcomes for Children and Youth.”

30th Anniversary of Swansea Wood School

The Swansea Wood School (SWS) celebrated its 30th anniversary this year. We opened with our first students on June 22, 1987. The staff at the SWS celebrated this milestone with a week of spirit activities for the students and the staff which included graduation, dress up day, crazy hat day, mix and match day and twin day. We ended the week with a field day, cookout and presentations. The SWS has four employees, who are still working there. Andy Pond, CEO of JRI also worked at the school as one of his first stops at the agency. Over the last couple of years we had three staff retire who also started in 1987.

DEVELOPING ABILITIES

On Friday February 17th, 2017, JRI Developing Abilities welcomed friends and families to an open house in Northboro. The new building is a gorgeous custom-designed, fully accessible building which houses Willow Tree Day Habilitation services, relocated from leased space in Westborough, and it provides an additional location for the growing MetroWest Works Employment Services. At the Open House, Developing Abilities Staff greeted over 100 guests, hosted tours of the building, and served refreshments. CEO Andy Pond welcomed individuals, families, guests, and JRI Staff. Vice President Deirdre Hunter thanked everyone involved in the design, construction, and relocation efforts, and praised JRI Staff for the magic they make happen every day.

JRI Leadership in Social Justice

ANNUAL REPORT 2017
JRI committed funding for a revolutionary project involving the long-term tracking and evaluation of clients after discharge. With the move toward evidence-based practice, there is an ongoing demand to demonstrate that interventions have the desired effect on the clinical populations they are designed to serve, and that these effects are enduring and result in improved functioning and productivity within society. To enhance the evaluation of the long-term impact of clinical services pre- and post-discharge, JRI is initiating a survey of risk and change indicators that will track the impact of services on client functioning. These indicators include educational status, employment status, parenting, substance use, health status, housing, arrests, community engagement, financial status, and relationship status.

The Cultural Responsiveness Initiative, supported by JRI’s highest levels, is the result of an increased organizational awareness about the importance of strengthening JRI as a more culturally-responsive organization. It is described as JRI’s efforts to honor and respect beliefs, interpersonal styles, attitudes, and behaviors of both families who are clients and the multicultural staff who are providing services. In doing so, it incorporates these values at the levels of policy, administration, and practice.

This initiative started in 2016 with an organizational assessment of strengths and the parallel creation of a diversity task force:

- The organizational assessment of strengths used the Appreciative Inquiry approach, under the premise that a sense of cultural responsiveness might exist at JRI already, however, there were limited processes in place for discovering that potential. Nine JRI programs participated between August and November 2016, with a total of 112 participant staff and 18 interview hours. A Diversity Task Force was created with two main goals of Developing a Cultural and linguistic competence and responsiveness policy and to develop a Diversity Strategic Plan. Both of which are in process to be approved by JRI’s Governing Body. This assessment provided baseline information about culture and diversity-related need.

JRI’s Clinical Review Team, led by Marta Casas, is a multidisciplinary group of staff members from different levels within the organization and different expertise and skills, who work collaboratively to review high risk and clinically-complex cases. It has been conceived as the highest level of consultation, by providing a forum to mitigate risk and helping to assure the highest coordination of care and clinically-sound treatment. During 2016, the CRT reviewed 47 cases. For 2017, the total estimated number of reviewed cases is 70. The clinical staff that have referred cases for CRT review have expressed great satisfaction with the overall process, as reflected in the results of a post-meeting quality survey they completed after a CRT review, which measures:

1. Perception of help to move the case forward: 100% agree
2. Perception of CRT members expertise: 98% agree
3. Perception of referral process as reasonable: 38% strongly agree, and 58% agree
FY'17 Operating Revenue by Service Category

FY 2017

Client Impact by Division

“Within the broader framework of a human services agency, JRI has really found, honed, and advanced its niche of trauma-informed care, and this will continue to differentiate the organization, as it will propel it forward. We look forward to JRI continuing its growth through both the acquisition and creation of new programs that will further this model of care, and to supporting the leadership and staff as they continue to innovate in a way that makes JRI both special and different.”

- Andrea Nix, JRI Board Chairperson
JRI Programs and Services

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & TRAUMA SERVICES PROGRAMS
Boston Trauma Response Team
CFFS Behavioral Health Services (Gloucester, Lawrence, Lynn & Salem)
Children’s Advocacy Center
Connecticut Behavioral Health Center
Integrated Clinical Services
Metrowest Behavioral Health Center
Southeast Behavioral Health Center
Southern New England Behavioral Health & Trauma Center
Total Achievement Program
Trauma Center at JRI

COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES PROGRAMS
Cape and Islands Community Service Agency
Cape and Islands Behavioral Health Services
Children’s Friend and Family Services
Clinical Services Team
Connecticut Community Based Services
Dimock CSA

DEVELOPING ABILITIES PROGRAMS
Berkshire Meadows
Day Habitation Services & Supports
Employment Services & Supports
Full Circle ARTS
Residential Services & Supports
Willow Tree Day Habilitation

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
Anchor Academy
Bay Cove Academy
Bridge Group Home
Case House
Early Childhood Services
Educational Advocacy Program
Granite Academy
Lanewood Group Home
Littleton Academy
Meadowridge Academy
Pelham Academy
Susan Wayne Center of Excellence
Susan Wayne Center of Excellence Clinical Day School
Swansea Wood School
van der Kolk Center
The Victor School
Walden Street School

TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS
Connecticut Group Homes
Evolution
GRIP
Journey Home
Lindencroft
Little Heroes
Rediscovery
STEP
Stepping Out
Teen Parenting Program

HEALTH PREVENTION & HOUSING PROGRAMS
Assisted Living
Boston GLASS
FOCUS
Health Law Institute
Housing Options
Huntington at Symphony
Medical Case Management
PACT Project
Peer Support Services
Program RISE

YOUTH & FOSTER CARE PROGRAMS
Adoption Program
Attleboro Center
Butler Center
Centerpoint
Cohannet Academy
Court Clinics
Connecticut Therapeutic Center
DYS Capacity Building
DYS NE Health Services
DYS West Health Services
MA Intensive Foster Care
Merrimack Center
Partial Hospitalization