

connection

NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRICE CENTER



Photo: Joan Marcus

Bernadette Peters

The Price Center Annual Gala: Bigger and Better than Ever

Bigger. Better. Brett. Bernadette.

Excitement is building around the 2012 Gala, an event that is taking The Price Center's signature fundraising soirée to a whole new level.

"The goal this year is to take the Gala and make it bigger," Gala chairwoman Michelle Fineberg said. "We want to take it from a neighborhood event and make it a city event—just like our goal is to take The Price Center and make it recognized throughout Massachusetts, not just in Newton and Brookline.

The transformation began with an ambitious plan to amp up the event's always-impressive star power even further. This October's Gala has become such a hot ticket because the headliner is, well, a hot ticket herself: Broadway sensation Bernadette Peters. The winner of multiple Tonys and Grammys and star of the NBC drama "Smash" will belt out favorites and classics from The Great American Songbook, backed by a 12-piece orchestra.

The event also celebrates a high-powered honoree: James T. Brett, the President and CEO of the New England Council. The Brett family's dedication to people with intellectual disabilities began before James was even born, when his mother rejected a

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doctor's advice to institutionalize his older brother Jack. Mary Ann Brett instead declared that he would be "going home" where she and his younger siblings would love and care for him.

Brett, a dedicated and tireless advocate for the disabled both when he served in the Massachusetts Legislature and now as a lobbyist, was appointed by President Barack Obama as Chairman of the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities last year. The Committee, which was created by President John F. Kennedy, recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. Brett also chairs Governor Deval Patrick's Commission on Intellectual Disability.

Since better means bigger, bigger meant Boston had to be the new destination. The new venue, Boston Marriott Copley Place, will hold twice the usual Gala crowd—800 guests this year—serving

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THE PRICE CENTER GALA
...like you've never seen it before!
Featuring Broadway Legend
Bernadette Peters

October 5th, 2012
Boston Marriott Copley Place

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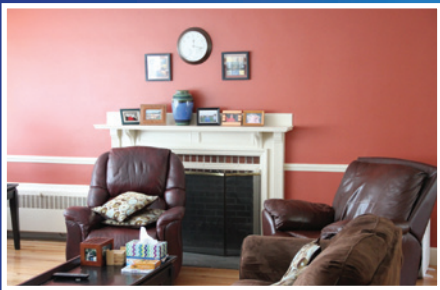


CHARLIE BAKER to Kick Off New Price Center Community Forum

Sending people with intellectual disabilities out into the community works best when that community is open and accepting—and when its leaders embrace the importance of valuing every individual, no matter what challenges they might face in life.

That's the operating principle behind a new event series, The Price Center Community Forum, which

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Making a House Feel More Like Home

When the men who call 1765 Washington St. home come inside for the evening, they won't have to look hard to see evidence that their voices are being heard and that their opinions matter.

When planning began for the recent renovation project to make over The Price Center group residence where they live, the men were unanimous in their opinion that the color red play an important role. As a result, the front, rear, and garage doors are now a welcoming shade of scarlet, and the main accent wall in the living room is an elegant and soothing rust color.

"They all love it, and so do we," 1765 Washington residential program manager Virginia Zimmerman said. "I have to say it - they really picked a winner."

Thanks to funding from the City of Newton, the improvements went far beyond the cosmetic. Openings between the kitchen, the dining room, and the living rooms were also expanded for better accessibility and visibility, creating a more open and airy feel.

Renovations also included a new roof, a conversion to gas heat, a new bathroom on the lower level, and a renovated and expanded bathroom on the upper level that includes a huge new shower with a fold-down bench, said Director of Residential Services Joanmarie Franco.

President's Perspective



At the close of another fiscal year, I am glad to report that The Price Center had a good year fiscally and programmatically. We have seen significant growth in our employment and day habilitation programs, and have successfully started our new supported living program. With funding from the City of Newton we have completed a major renovation of one of our Washington Street residences making the house fully accessible. In January, to accommodate our need for more programming space, we moved our employment program and administrative offices to our new 77 Rowe Street location.

This spring, as usual, has been taken up with worries about the state budget. The funding for several of our programs still has question marks. The current determination of rates for our Employment Services Program and the projected rate determination of Residential rates are two examples of this. As usual we will keep you updated and let you know, if we need your help in advocating for these programs.

This year we are initiating The Price Center Community Forum, a luncheon event that features

business and community leaders. Our first event will be on September 6th at the Capital Grill Restaurant in Chestnut Hill. The speaker will be Charlie Baker, former CEO of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care. The topic is how businesses can use philanthropy to help further their business goals. We are hoping for a good turnout.

As usual, the big event of our year is the Gala. This year Bernadette Peters, star of stage and screen, will be our performer. This year's Gala will be held at a new location, the Copley Marriott. The Gala Committee is already very active in preparing for the event. The new site will allow us to accommodate more people, so please encourage all your friends to attend. We need everyone's help if we are going to reach our goals for the event.

As you know, fundraising allows us to enhance the quality of our services and also provides The Center with financial stability. We are fortunate to have so many dedicated donors. Thank you for your continued generosity and support.

Sincerely,

Justin Sallaway
President



STANDING (L-R): Tony Concannon, Jan Saragoni, Justin Sallaway, Larry Zabar, James Brett. SEATED: Denise Baker.

Gala Honoree Jim Brett Visits Newton Day Hab

New England Council President James Brett, who will be honored at The Price Center Gala in October, toured the Newton Day Habilitation and ASCENT program headquarters on Border Street in late July. Brett, a tireless advocate for people with intellectual disabilities, was named by President Barack Obama as Chairman of the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities in 2011. Brett stayed at the facility for nearly two hours, chatting with staff and warmly meeting and greeting program participants.

Employment Services Makes Big Moves Forward

The Price Center is seeing some of the most exciting developments in its employment services program since the agency was founded as a jobs program almost four decades ago.

Until recently the Price Center's employment programs were housed in separate locations. That all changed with The Price Center's move to 77 Rowe Street. The larger space allowed the agency to consolidate the programs and establish a new, state-of-the-art computer training center with twice as many workstations as before. Lori Harrington, Director of Employment Services, said the new facility is popular even beyond staff expectations.

"We have people who want to be in the computer center every single day," Harrington said. "They really like it."

The computers in the new Employment Services center are equipped with Computers at Work and other cutting-edge job training software that not only allows staff to train clients in skills such as typing, data entry, and order processing, but also allows them to evaluate whether a client is ready to take on the challenge of working independently in the community.

Harrington says the facility's location is surrounded by staff offices, creating a real-world work atmosphere that was difficult to replicate before—especially at Border Street.

Meanwhile, The Price Center has made a new connection with one of the region's most enthusiastic employers of people with intellectual disabilities.

VERC Enterprises, a company that operates more than two dozen gasoline stations, convenience stores and car washes in Eastern Massachusetts, recently hired a Price Center client for a 3-day-a-week job at one of its Framingham locations. Price Center Business Development Specialist Rebecca Lynch said the company has surpassed even its own goals for hiring people with developmental disabilities, who now make up 20 percent of the VERC workforce.

"I have not run into another employer with more of a commitment to not only seeing the value of this population, but also to walking the talk and doing the hiring," Lynch said.

VERC President Leo Vercollone said he loves the dedication, stability and enthusiasm of his workforce—especially in the gas station/convenience store industry, where yearly turnover rates can routinely near 100 percent. He says he would definitely recommend that other businesses make a serious effort to hire people with intellectual disabilities.

"It definitely works for me," Vercollone said.



TOP: Josh Pactovis; MIDDLE: Susan Hooper; BOTTOM: Kunal Sharma

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notice that The Price Center has arrived as one of the major charity events on the region's social calendar.

"I want us to be on the map in Boston," Fineberg said. "When people talk about the Storybook Ball, about Steppin' Out, I want us to be on that list."

And of course it's for the best of causes—helping The Price Center help people with intellectual disabilities lead lives filled with joy, purpose and meaning.

"We feel a greater responsibility every year to bring in more money so that the Price Center can be innovative and creative in accomplishing its mission," she said. "I would like to have more people than we ever had before, and raise more money than we ever have before."

Due to the enormous popularity of both the headliner and the honoree, tickets and sponsorships for the event are expected to go fast. They can be purchased on The Price Center's web site—thepricecenter.org—or by calling (781) 239-1480.

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welcomes former Harvard Pilgrim Health Care CEO Charlie Baker as its inaugural speaker on Thursday, Sept. 6 at the Capital Grille in Chestnut Hill.

Baker believes businesses can do well by doing good—his talk is titled "Leveraging Philanthropy—Cultivating a Competitive Business Edge."

The Needham native is equally well-qualified to dispense wisdom from both a business and human services perspective. The former CEO of one of the highest-rated private health insurers in the nation, Baker was also Secretary of Health and Human Services under Governor William Weld and later Secretary of Administration and Finance under Weld and Governor Paul Cellucci.

He is currently Executive in Residence at General Catalyst Partners, a Cambridge-based venture capital firm that focuses on helping entrepreneurs and emerging companies bring products and innovations to market.

The lunchtime event will be emceed by Fox25 News anchor Maria Stephanos, one of Boston's most experienced television journalists. A Massachusetts native and Emerson College grad, Stephanos recently celebrated her 15th year with Fox25 and is known in Boston as an avid supporter of charitable causes.

Attendees will also be served a stellar lunch by the chefs and

servers of the Capital Grille, one of the region's most beloved steakhouses. There will also be a special surprise we can't tell you about, but trust us—it's an event not to be missed.

Tickets for the event are \$50 and can be purchased through The Price Center's web site—thepricecenter.org—or by calling 617-244-0065



The Price Center Community Forum Emcee Maria Stephanos, FOX25 News Anchor

VIPs Visit Price Center Programs

The Price Center has been fortunate to receive several recent distinguished visitors, including top executives from the Dedham Institution for Savings. President and CEO Peter Brown and Executive Vice President and COO Jerry Lavoie toured the Intensive Day Habilitation program in Dedham.

Brown and Lavoie are both trustees of the Dedham Savings Charitable Foundation, which recently gave The Price Center a grant to equip a new Sensory Room at the Dedham facility. A sensory room is a specialized space furnished with equipment that helps staff work successfully with individuals who may be susceptible to either overstimulation or understimulation.

Fox25 News anchor Maria Stephanos, who will emcee the first event of The Price Center Community Forum, also met with staff and clients recently. Stephanos visited the Intensive Day Habilitation Program at The Price Center's Border Street facility in Dedham.



FRONT (L-R): Scott Laughlin, Justin Salloway, Dan Frank, Newton Mayor Setti D. Warren, Michelle Fineberg, Lois Cohen.
BACK: Tony Concannon, Newton Director of Health and Human Services Linda Walsh.

The Price Center, the City of Newton, and the Mayor: Building Community

One key to The Price Center's success has been its excellent relationship with the City of Newton and Mayor Setti Warren.

Warren visited The Price Center's Border Street facility for over an hour in March. He toured the site, chatted with Price Center staff and met participants in the Newton Day Habilitation program. In May, the Mayor honored The Price Center with a "Citation for Outstanding Service."

"In recognition of a well-deserved tribute to your service," the citation states, "I join together with the citizens of Newton in expressing our deep

appreciation and highest regard for your ongoing work in encouraging disabled individuals' personal growth and full participation in their communities through social, living and work experiences that respect their preferences and accommodate diversity.

The Price Center's mission has been further enhanced by the fact that not only have Warren and the City talked the talk, they've also walked the walk—backing their kind words with funding for important projects. The recently-completed renovations to the group home at 1765 Washington St. would not have been possible without \$189,000 in funding from the city.

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