A Letter from the Executive Director
A Letter from the President
Events
Community and Foundation Partners
2019 Community Rowing Contributors
Welcome to the 2019 Impact Report from Community Rowing. It was my first full year behind the helm of this incredible collection of passionate rowers, staff, friends and partners. And what a year of firsts it was – we elected our first board chair in 10 years, we affirmed our partnership with USRowing to become the USRowing Para Training Center, we celebrated our biggest year of the YETI, we initiated a strategic planning process and much, much more. In addition to many firsts, we were also carried by a strong "tailwind" of continuing and returning support from our community. We benefited from the generosity and support of our community revealed through a considerable increase in philanthropic support of CRI.

With all the action at CRI, I’ve reflected on an important question about all this activity— who does better when CRI simply does better. Put another way, all these improvements, innovations and updates enable us to, in fact, do “better”.

CRI is nationally recognized as a thought leader and model for solving some of the thorniest challenges in our sport – providing equitable access to the sport of rowing while functioning as a thriving advocate for the underserved as well as a highly functioning public access “boat club”. Here’s just a small taste of what happens when we do better: young women preparing for international competition practice racing against aspiring Paralympic athletes. State Police officers rowing here in a free program for first responders to maintain their physical and mental health share the same boats as our competitive men’s team. Our Row Boston student-athletes feel equally at “home” in our boathouse as our competitive youth teams who both benefit from the talents of young, professional and passionate coaches.

The fact that our rowers share, cooperate and thrive in an environment where no one does better unless we all do is foundational to CRI’s mission and our incredible success. There were some particularly meaningful opportunities before us in 2019 to do “better” – all built on the visible and invisible successes of everyone at CRI “doing better”. CRI is in a much stronger and more robust position than we were a year ago because of our amazing staff and the community that continues to embrace our mission.

I close with an inspirational quote from Melnea Cass, a local Community and Civil Rights Activist whose namesake building is a new home to our Let’sRow and RowBoston programs in downtown Boston: “I am convinced that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can, for the harder I work, the more I live.” We are a community engaged by a sport founded in the joy of working hard and pulling together. Melnea Cass’ prescient and inspirational comments are as true today as they were when she so enriched the Boston community in the mid 20th Century.

We have done better in 2019 on the shoulders of all those who have come before us, and we can’t wait to see where it takes us 2020. In the meantime, I want to thank our amazing staff for helping us deliver life changing impact on those we serve and share my gratitude for all those among us who support this unique organization and the mission we all deeply believe in.

Thank you and see you in 2020!

Ted Benford
A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

After such amazing expansion under Lila’s leadership, the Board has arrived at a natural transition point in an organization’s growth. Over the past year, we have shifted from an operational board to an oversight board, which means that the board will be focused on supporting Ted and his staff in a more strategic manner and will step out of any day-to-day operational support that it had in the past.

With the strength of Ted’s staff, and their focus on internal operational excellence, the board will be able to focus its efforts on the overall strategy and growing the fundraising foundation of the organization. The board has also undertaken a comprehensive strategic planning effort, which has included feedback from staff, trustees, members, donors, and other stakeholders in Community Rowing’s future. This effort will enable the organization to clearly define a vision for the next few years and shape our impact in the Greater Boston area.

In 2019, Ted and his staff focused their efforts on operational improvements and a significant push toward fiscal sustainability, which included rebuilding our development efforts from the bottom up. As a result, our financial situation has made a marked improvement, and we have made significant strides in a variety of operational areas.

As we row into our second decade at the Harry Parker Boathouse, the board is energized and excited to position the organization for long-term success. We look forward to transforming lives through rowing with a clear vision, strengthened operations, and solid fundraising foundation.

We are always grateful for your support. See you on the water.

Kevin Dutt

“We look forward to transforming lives through rowing with a clear vision, strengthened operations, and solid fundraising foundation.”
**Grace, Grit and Glory**

On January 25th, 2020, we honored Dr. Kate Ackerman at CRI’s annual celebration of women in rowing, Grace, Grit, and Glory. This event serves as a networking opportunity for our Row Boston athletes, and all fundraising efforts from GGG support Row Boston. Started as Girls-Row in the 1990s, our program for Boston Public School students includes academic support, college tours, and mentorship opportunities in addition to competitive rowing instruction.

**2020 CRI Fall Classic Regatta**

Save the Date! Join us at the 11th CRI Fall Classic Regatta in support of our Inclusion and Advocacy Programs. September 19, 2020
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Amazon “Smile”
Amgen Foundation
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Jane’s Trust

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$25,000 - $49,999
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$1,000 - $2,499
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Phone: 617-277-9999
Email: info@charitabledirectory.org

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CRI’s high performance group athletes
Practice summer 2019
Photograph by Damian Strohmeyer