



# FOOD for THOUGHT

Beverly Bootstraps Community Services Newsletter

Winter 2010

## Bootstraps' Best Chef Competition

Monday, February 8  
6-10 pm

Bass River Tennis Club

Come watch Beverly's top chefs compete using Bootstraps Food Pantry Ingredients!

See insert for more information

## Feinstein Challenge

The Feinstein Foundation once again is working with Bootstraps to fight local hunger.

All cash or food donations to Bootstraps between March 1 - April 30 will go toward a match to this \$1 million challenge.

Last year we raised over \$22,000!

## HOW CAN I HELP?

### DONATIONS

We are seeking help to purchase two AEDs (automated external defibrillator) for Beverly Bootstraps food pantry and thrift store. Staff recently were trained in rescue breathing, CPR, how to help choking victims and how to use an AED.

We need a new or used box truck for thrift store and food pantry pick ups. Because we need so much more food, the vehicle we have is no longer adequate.

Consider including Bootstraps in your estate planning.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Graphic designer with In Design experience to help with newsletter layout.

### EMAIL

If you would prefer to receive our newsletter via email, please drop us a line at [info@beverlybootstraps.org](mailto:info@beverlybootstraps.org), or call Amy at 978-927-1561.

### FACEBOOK

Become a Fan of Beverly Bootstraps on Facebook!

## Faces & Voices of Bootstraps

"I'm sure I speak for so many people who, like myself, are not able to provide for their families. We are so thankful for Beverly Bootstraps Outreach Services and the Food Pantry. My son and I had a wonderful turkey dinner provided by the Food Pantry along with some badly needed personal items. Thank you to all the people who make the lives of many people happier and easier."  
-Bootstraps client

*"Our community is a better place because of your passion to serve."* - donor

"To Fisher Fuel and Bootstraps: I can't thank you both enough for the July payment of my rent. I had to go back to school to find work and my husband has been out of work since November, last year. This means so much to us as we really didn't know what we were going to do. I will be able to start working after my state CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) test, so the good Lord and many others are looking out for us. I hope that when we finally are in the black, I will be able to give back as I know how much it means to those who never think they will ever be able to take care of themselves. God bless you!  
- Bootstraps' client



Doris McCue and Barbara Gillis use the Food Pantry regularly. As neighbors, they share rides and the cooking. Barbara says, "Getting food from the Food Pantry helps make ends meet. We can use the money saved on other expenses."

"My observation is that the number of clients needing Beverly Bootstraps Community Services' assistance, especially for the use of the Food Pantry, has increased dramatically in the last six months. If you don't have enough food and a place to sleep, then you cannot think about taking a class such as English as a Second Language (ESL)." - Yvonne Healey, volunteer/ESL teacher

"I work full time and have a very busy life with two young kids, but taking an evening out every week (plus a little more for classroom prep) to teach the class has deeply moved and inspired me. I love my students and am incredibly motivated by their hard work and dedication. Most of their lives are tough, working at lower level jobs such as housecleaning because other avenues aren't open to them because their English skills are low. What I do has the potential to change lives. As their English improves I can only hope for more opportunities for them. In the meantime they serve as "teachers" to me every week -- giving me a chance to reflect on what it means to be an American, marvel and laugh over differences in culture and language, and most importantly, allow me to see a broader and infinitely richer world than my own suburban existence allows."

- Laura Acari, volunteer/ESL teacher



Louise Gallo receives gifts at our Adopt-a-Family program. Since losing her job a year ago, she has turned to Bootstraps for many types of assistance.

Beverly Bootstraps Community Services  
is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

[www.beverlybootstraps.org](http://www.beverlybootstraps.org)

5 - 6 pm Tues & Wed

11 am - 12:30 pm Mon - Fri

### FOOD PANTRY

PHONE: 978-921-4710

Sat 9:30 am - 1:30 pm

Mon - Fri 9:30 am - 5:00 pm

198 Rantoul Street, Beverly

### THRIFT STORE

BOOTS, STRAPS & MORE

FAX: 978-927-1553

PHONE: 978-927-1561

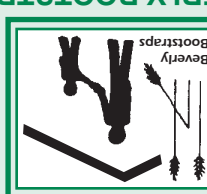
Mon - Fri 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Beverly, MA 01915

371 Cabot Street

### COMMUNITY SERVICES

### BEVERLY BOOTSTRAPS



Return Service Requested

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## VOLUNTEER CORNER



Kris Cowles (left, with volunteer coordinator, Kristna Evans) began volunteering with Beverly Bootstraps in September, 2008. In 15 months she has become one of those volunteers on whom we rely. In addition to regularly staffing our front desk with confidence and panache (sometimes the staff turn to her for the answers!), she regularly takes on extra shifts to cover for other front desk volunteers when they can't make it. We don't know what we'd do without Kris's steady and cheerful presence and the many hours both she and her husband Gary give to Bootstraps.

### BEVERLY BOOTSTRAPS COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Hunger**  
 Food Pantry  
 SERVE Food Coop  
 Community Gardens  
 Summer Playground Lunches

**Case Management**  
 Intervention and Advocacy  
 Resource and Referral Services  
 Heat Assistance  
 Housing Support

**Clothing and Goods**  
 Boots, Straps & More Thrift Store

**Education and Careers**  
 Adult Literacy Classes  
 GED Test Prep Classes  
 English as a Second Language Classes  
 Career Counseling  
 Financial Education Classes

**Children**  
 After-School Homework Club  
 After-School Teen Cyber Café  
 Youth Literacy Program  
 Back-to-School Backpacks  
 Adopt-a-Family Holiday Program

## Training for Today's World

Just a century ago, Beverly's United Shoe Machinery (USM) Company employed 4,500 local residents in its local manufacturing plant. Now the USM plant at the Cummings Center is filled with technology and knowledge-based companies. The world has changed, and this we know: Today's good jobs require the use of technology and on average pay 40 percent more than non-technology jobs.

At Beverly Bootstraps Community Services, many clients lack computer skills and the "soft" professional skills, such as interviewing, resume-writing, and networking, that are necessary to secure good, living-wage jobs.

Through our Linking Information for Employment (LIFE) Skills Program, we are committed to helping our clients overcome these barriers, gain greater confidence, and build a better life.

Launched in 2008, in partnership with Salem CyberSpace (a technology training organization for at-risk youth), LIFE Skills prepares students for the unique challenges and opportunities of today's workplace. The six-week course covers computer fundamentals, e-mail, Microsoft Word and Excel, career planning and interviewing, and financial literacy. The program was initiated by a grant from the North Shore United Way in collaboration with Salem CyberSpace.

LIFE Skills encourages professional networking in addition to technology training. Joan Milnes, director of the Office of Internships and Career Services at Montserrat College of Art, meets with clients at Bootstraps to discuss their resume and potential employment opportunities. In addition, students can meet once a week with an outreach specialist at the North Shore Career Center.

When the program was first underway, we experienced low student retention rates due to the periodic health, transportation, and day care issues of our clients. Although sensitive to these issues, we are committed to the program's success and have implemented several



measures/incentives to boost retention. For example, we now require a small advance payment (which is returned after course completion), and we carefully pre-screen students before enrollment - all of which has resulted in higher retention rates.

The impact of the LIFE Skills Program can be seen in the small and large achievements of our students.

- Willa secured a personal care assistant job after the course was finished and remains employed in that position.
- Margaret came to LIFE Skills hoping to find a job and improve the quality of life for herself and her three children. She had little previous computer experience but quickly became adept at Microsoft Word and Excel. By the end of the course, Margaret had a new resume and cover letter that she herself had created.
- Jeremy came to LIFE Skills because he wanted to create a resume and upgrade his type of job. He had minimal computer skills and was nervous about launching in, but he showed incredible improvement during the course. By the end, he had a resume and was submitting it to job leads.

In its first two years, LIFE Skills has "graduated" 28 students from its nine sessions. Five more six-week sessions are planned for 2010. We are excited about growing this program in the coming years because it creates meaningful pathways, and real life opportunities, for talented individuals who simply need extra support to achieve their true potential.

For more information about the LIFE Skills Program, please contact Greg Ezell, Outreach Coordinator.

## Sue's Spot

Happy New Year! As a parent, I know my children have certain years that are big developmentally – full of change and growth. 2009 was a "big" year for Beverly Bootstraps Community Services.

Our first priority was to keep up with the number of people seeking assistance for basic needs such as food, heat and rent or mortgage payments. In addition, we spent time assessing the organization through a strategic planning process.

We evaluated programs, reorganized staff, reassigned tasks and added a Volunteer Coordinator to best use our 250+ volunteers. We sought new ways to more efficiently gather food. We maintained the best parts of our programs and revamped or strengthened areas of weakness. At present, we have waiting lists for our GED test prep program and our beginner English as a Second Language (ESL) class. Our Youth Programs are at capacity, and students' grades continue to improve.

Seasonal programs such as the Backpack Bonanza and the Adopt-a-Family experienced startling growth in 2009: 582 backpacks were distributed (compared to 475 backpacks in 2008) and over 425 children received gifts through the Adopt-a-Family program (versus 340 children in 2008).

As we enter 2010 with reports that the unemployment rate is beginning to drop, we hope the number of people needing assistance will stabilize (in 2008, we experienced a 19% increase and in 2009 an additional 16%). However, we are well aware that it will be a long time before someone like Louise Gallo, who has been unemployed for over a year and who is responsible for her two young children, can truly become self-sufficient (see her photo on page one).

**We are grateful to all of you who support our important work.** This year we are excited to bring two new events to the community to make it fun to assist our efforts. Please come help us award the honor to the chef who is most creative with our Food Pantry food at **Bootstraps' Best Chef on February 8th** and enjoy a night of Greek food and celebration at **Opa! on May 2nd.**

As always, please call me anytime with your ideas or comments: 978 927-1561.

*Sue Gabriel, Executive Director*



*ESL instructor Yvonne Healey (front center) and her students. Read Yvonne's quote on page one.*