YEARS OF BUILDING POWER FOR THE COMMON GOOD
About GBIO

WHO WE ARE

The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO), founded in 1998, is a broad-based organization that works for the public good by coalescing, training, and organizing people across religious, racial, ethnic, class, and neighborhood lines. Membership consists of 41 congregations in Greater Boston representing more than 45,000 individuals. GBIO organizes people and institutions at neighborhood, city, and state levels.

By engaging thousands of people in identifying important problems and using proven organizing methods to engage and develop leaders, GBIO has built and demonstrated collective strength to achieve a wide variety of goals. As times change, so, too, do the issues GBIO selects.

GBIO is affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), the nation’s first and largest network of multi-faith citizen organizations. Today, the IAF is made up of 65 organizations working in cities and metropolitan areas across the country and internationally, on issues ranging from health care to education to housing.

GBIO works most closely with the 23 IAF organizations operating in the East, Midwest, and Southeast that have joined together to form Metro IAF. Those organizations have secured the construction of thousands of units of affordable housing, pioneered work on health care reform, transformed dilapidated and underperforming urban area schools, and gained a whole host of other victories.

To learn more: www.metro-iaf.org
www.facebook.com/metroiaf
@MetroIAF

“We are non-ideological and pragmatic—building working relationships, based on shared interests, across many of the lines that divide individuals and institutions. We are also strictly non-partisan.”

GBIO leaders at the Industrial Areas 2018 National Training in Baltimore.
A YEAR OF TRANSITION AND POWERFUL ACTION

NEW LEADERSHIP

In 2018, GBIO transitioned from one outstanding leader to another, engaging a dynamic young organizer representing the best of the next generation of professionals in the field to take the helm from our wise and experienced prior Lead Organizer, Larry Gordon, following his retirement. Kathleen Patrón, an organizer with IAF since 2011, came to GBIO in 2016 from IAF-affiliate Common Ground in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While there, she was part of their successful housing campaign, which secured $33.8 million from large national banks to invest in a foreclosure-torn neighborhood. Moreover, Kathleen sought and built a new base of leadership in Milwaukee’s predominantly Latino Southside. Since joining GBIO she has distinguished herself with skilled organizing on GBIO’s recent campaigns.

GBIO’s Strategy Team finds Kathleen to be an energetic organizer, with a strategic mind and sophisticated understanding of power, one who connects well with a wide variety of people and is a valued mentor. She brings strong fundraising and communications skills, which will bolster GBIO’s infrastructure and expand its reach. GBIO’s leadership is thrilled that the organization, so capably shepherded by Larry, will continue to thrive under Kathleen’s guidance, and wishes to recognize Larry for his exceptional contributions over his 13 years with GBIO.

20 YEARS OF BUILDING POWER

For 20 years, GBIO has been concerned about inequality, and inequality continues to be a focus of our work. New data shows that Boston is one of the most unequal cities in the U.S. This disparity is especially stark along racial lines. White households in the Boston metropolitan area have a median net worth of over $250,000, while black households have a median net worth of just $8 (not a typo). Boston is transforming into a city where not only the working poor but even middle class families can no longer afford to live. These trends are radiating outward through the entire metropolitan area.

With this growing inequality of income and wealth comes a parallel growth in inequality of access, influence, and decision-making power. GBIO’s ultimate goal is to shift the balance of power, so that Boston can remain a vibrant, diverse city in which people needn’t be wealthy and elite to live, work, and participate in political action. GBIO grows and exercises its power to negotiate around members’ interests. Through growing our power, we gain access to a seat at decision-making tables, and develop long-term relationships of accountability with public and private power holders.

This year GBIO celebrated its 20th anniversary of organizing power in Greater Boston.

We look forward to what is next in our work holding government and corporate power players accountable for the common good.
The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization engaged new leaders in a large scale House Meeting or “Listening Campaign.”

- Top issues that emerged from the campaign included: Healthcare affordability—especially skyrocketing out-of-pocket and drug costs, and high cost and lack of access for mental health care— along with affordable homeownership and housing, and immigration. Other issues that garnered interest included: Gun Violence, Climate Justice, Education Reform, and Racial Justice.

The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization held significant large public actions:
- August 23rd, 2018: 537 people gathered for a Candidate Accountability Action with Candidates for Middlesex and Suffolk District Attorney and the Democratic Candidates for Governor.
- October 22, 2018: 1,487 people convened at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center on issues of Healthcare, Affordable Homeownership, Criminal Justice Reform and Immigration.
- 580 people participated in local actions on neighborhood safety and parks.

During 2018, GBIÖ achieved new victories on major issue campaigns and on important internal initiatives:
- Criminal Justice Reform (More on Page 6)
  - Celebrated landmark Criminal Justice Reform legislation which included:
    1) Repeal of mandatory minimums for low level drug offenses, 2) Bail reform, 3) Reduction of post release fees and fines, and 4) Reduction of solitary confinement time.
  - Ran a What a Difference a DA Makes campaign to engage District Attorney Candidates in criminal justice reform.
- Affordable Healthcare (more on Page 8)
  - Engaged in campaign regarding the merger of Beth Israel and Lahey Health Systems and 13 other hospitals. The result was a court-filed consumer protection agreement, which included:
    1) $1 billion of healthcare cost savings over seven years, 2) Improved access for low income/Medicaid customers, and 3) $72 million to support community health centers
- Affordable Housing (More on Page 10)
  - The City of Boston added NEW homeownership specific goals in his updated 2030 plan which could enable 1000 new homeowners to purchase homes over 5 years.
- Impact Fund (More on page 12)
  - GBIO’s Individual Donor Campaign, increased individual contributions by 22% - $122,319 and increased number of donors 41% 556 donors.
  - Up from $100,126 from over 393 donors in 2017.
- 2 New Member Organizations
  St. Paul AME, Cambridge
  Temple Ohabei Shalom, Brookline
HOW WE WORK

Although no rigid pattern governs our work, GBIO typically acts in an iterative cycle:

- **We listen** by bringing people together in our member institutions to share stories about issues that affect the quality of our lives, our families, and our communities. Then we choose to focus on issues we all can support;
- **We find and develop leaders** in our member institutions, creating cross-institutional teams that work to build and refine the issues, potential actions, and timing of our strategy to effect change;
- **We identify themes**, looking for issues of common interest across our membership, then do more focused research on these issues, identifying opportunities for relevant, timely, effective action;
- **We build strong relationships** through cross-institutional issue teams. We develop strategies and propose them through periodic Delegate Assemblies across the entire GBIO membership. There we affirm consent for moving forward on specific actions;
- **We act** through GBIO Actions where we gather key public and/or private decision-makers, share members’ stories, define specific solutions, and negotiate with those decision makers;
- **We celebrate success.** We follow issues, often for years, maintain connections with and accountability from our allies and public officials, and celebrate the collective accomplishments of GBIO;
- **We evaluate** continuously to grow, develop, and improve leadership.

Twenty years after its founders first met, GBIO has fulfilled the promise to work across historic barriers to effectively promote social justice on an increasing number of issues.
GBIO Power:

What a Difference a DA Makes

Following the passage of landmark Criminal Justice Reform Legislation in early 2018, GBIO set its sights on a new campaign. In collaboration with the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, GBIO successfully ran a nonpartisan voter education and engagement campaign called What a Difference a DA Makes.

A District Attorney (DA) is one of the most powerful people in the criminal justice system. These elected officials decide who gets charged with a crime and decide how most criminal cases are resolved. Through our legislative work, we found that DAs have powerful influence over legislators and have used that influence to block progressive reform for over a decade. This has had a tremendous and often negative impact on the lives of people in our communities, especially our urban communities.

Through this campaign, GBIO shifted the power dynamics of the DA race—called, by the Boston Globe, “one of the busiest and flashiest races of the local primary season” since the 16-year, uncontested incumbent Suffolk County DA decided not to run.

2018 CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM ACTIONS

Understanding that an educated voter would likely vote for a candidate committed to criminal and social justice, GBIO held community education forums, participated in Court watches, and ran actions within two prominent District Attorney counties: Suffolk County, including Boston proper, and Middlesex County.

GBIO hosted 4 voter education forums in collaboration with Rahsaan Hall, the Director of the Racial Justice Program for the ACLU.

- Congregation Dorshei Tzedek (Newton) in collaboration with First Unitarian Universalist Society of Newton (FUUSN), led by Alan Epstein.
- Temple Israel (Boston) and Temple Sinai (Brookline), led by Kathy Weinman, Sandra Wixted, and Michael Nam-Krane. New GBIO-member Ohabei Shalom (Brookline) also participated.
- GBIO-sponsored event at Freedom House (Roxbury) led by Beverly Williams.
- Temple Isaiah (Lexington) led by Linda Ziffirin and Chuck Koplik, with participants attending from Hancock UCC, Congregation Shalom, First Parish UU of Arlington and other congregations.
**GBIO ACTIONS**

**GBIO COURT WATCH in collaboration with The Mass Bail Fund**

Over 150 GBIO members participated in an extensive 3 hour Court Watch training.

GBIO Court Watchers sat in district courts during 4 hour sessions, watching and recording the practices of Assistant District Attorneys.

**Candidate Accountability Action**

On August 23rd, 537 GBIO delegates and guests gathered at the Boston Teachers Union in Dorchester to hear District Attorney candidates from Suffolk and Middlesex counties present their platforms, and to secure commitments to implement more just policies and practices on:

1. Reform of Mandatory Minimum sentences,
2. Diversion before arraignment, if appropriate,
3. Elimination of bail unless it carries the possibility of a state prison sentence, and
4. Improved data transparency.

Beverly Williams, GBIO leader, told the crowd that filled the Boston Teachers Union in Dorchester:

“What you saw happening here was American democracy at its best”

— Boston Globe, August 24, 2018

**2018 General Election Action**

On October 22nd, 1,487 delegates and guests gathered at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center with Suffolk County finalists for District Attorney to push for full and rapid implementation of the new CJR law, including gathering and reporting data about racial outcomes.

GBIO received commitments from DA candidates, including now-elected District Attorney, Rachael Rollins, to implement more just policies.
In 2018, GBIO congregations held house meetings that highlighted their members’ struggles with the cost of healthcare, with access to care and with navigating the complexity of the healthcare system. The GBIO Healthcare Action Team organized in 2018 to build on its legacy of successful healthcare actions. GBIO has exercised power at the decision-making tables for health care since 2006:

Eventually, GBIO fought for and won cost controls which will save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts $1.2 billion dollars over the next seven years, improved access for low income/Medicaid patients, and $72 million to support community health centers.

Major Milestones in Healthcare Actions

In 2006, GBIO championed affordable healthcare for all people in Massachusetts with the Healthcare Reform Act that became the model for the national Affordable Care Act.

In 2012, GBIO led efforts to create the Healthcare Cost Control Benchmark, designed to limit the unrelenting rise in healthcare costs, and the Health Policy Commission, an independent body created to analyze and report on whether our healthcare system was meeting cost control goals.
To win this concession, GBIO organized to be part of the public review of the merger, leading to strong testimony from Healthcare Action Team co-chair Bonny Gilbert before the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Health Policy Commission.

Healthcare Team Co-Chair Bonny Gilbert argued for protections against consumer cost hikes, saying,

“We cannot afford to allow any more mergers solely on the basis of well-intended, yet unaccountable goal statements. You, the Public Health Council, have a responsibility to the Massachusetts citizens to require that this merger live up to its goals by requiring it to maintain per capita health care spending growth at or below the benchmark, and to document this compliance, with consequences for any failure.”

We worked with Attorney General Maura Healey on our recommendations for capping prices, and we invited the Attorney General to our October Action where she faced our 1,487 delegates. As she sat on stage, she saw a sea of raised hands from delegates struggling to afford their healthcare or fighting to access the healthcare they need. Attorney General Healey recognized GBIO’s leadership in this fight and committed to using her powers as Attorney General to hold the line on healthcare costs. One month following our action, she delivered an innovative consumer protection agreement that will enforce the cost controls we demanded.

“In a statement, Healey’s office called the seven-year price cap ‘unprecedented.’ BILH will keep its annual contracts 0.10 percent below the state health care cost benchmark, which is currently set at 3.1 percent. The AG’s office says that translates to $1.2 billion in avoided increases over the life of the agreement.

BILH will be required to hire an independent monitor for the next 10 years, who will issue an annual report on the network’s compliance with this agreement.”

– WBUR, November 2018

In 2015, GBIO organized to stop the purchase of South Shore Hospital.

In 2018, the merger of Beth Israel and Lahey hospital systems (BILH), including 13 hospitals across Eastern Massachusetts, was sailing towards approval. This was the largest healthcare merger in Massachusetts since 1994. GBIO fought for transparent data that showed the effects of this merger on taxpayers and consumers. When the Health Policy Commission reported outrageous cost increases due to market consolidation, along with decreased access for low income and communities of color, GBIO came out in strong opposition to the merger.
**GBIO Power:**

**Affordable Home Ownership**

Our Affordable Homeownership campaign began with a successful fight for adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in the City of Boston.

**Major Milestones in our Affordable Homeownership Campaign**

GBIO’s **2016** Get Out The Vote effort for the CPA proved effective in guaranteeing a new source of funding projected at $20 million annually at least 1/3 of which will be dedicated to affordable housing.

In **2017**, GBIO secured $6M from developer Boston Properties to support affordable home ownership and historic preservation.

In **2018** GBIO’s campaign for more fair, affordable and equitable housing continued. With the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance (MAHA), GBIO campaigned for **1,000 new homeowners over the next five years** to address Boston’s racial homeownership gap.

**Homeownership rates are disproportionately low for households of color.** While 44% of Boston’s white, non-Hispanic households are homeowners, only 16% of Hispanic/Latino households, 26% of Asian households, and 29% of Black/African American households are.

This is not just a Boston phenomenon; – Housing Boston 2030, Update 2018

“If you are Black or Latino, achieving homeownership is simultaneously more difficult and more important.”  
- Jeanette Callahan from GBIO, with Donna King from MAHA, while testifying on Boston’s racial wealth and homeownership gaps at a Boston City Council hearing in November.

In **2018**, GBIO’s Affordable Homeownership Team concentrated on meeting with City of Boston Officials to emphasize the need to prioritize homeownership and close the racial homeownership gap. Following meetings with the City Councilors, the Department of Neighborhood & Development and subsequently with Mayor Walsh built momentum towards addressing homeownership in the Mayor’s updated 2030 housing plan.

**The updated 2030 Housing Boston plan:**

1. **New Goal**  
Reduce barriers to affordable homeownership and increase opportunities for homeownership, particularly for low-and middle-income families and families of color.

2. **New Actions**  
In partnership with lenders like MassHousing and MHP, create lower interest mortgage products that would allow more low and moderate income homebuyers to afford a home in Boston.

Make more city resources (e.g., Linkage, IDP Funds, and CPA and larger land packages) available to create income-restricted homeownership units, and advocate that some state resources be made available for homeownership; explore alternative forms of ownership such as community land trusts and cooperatives to boost the rates of stable, resident controlled housing.

— Housing Boston 2030, Update 2018 from the City of Boston
Staying the Course for Roxbury and Dorchester STEM Education at the Dearborn School

From 2009 to 2014, GBIO leaders, including then-GBIO President Rev. Hurmon Hamilton of Roxbury Presbyterian Church, fought and won a battle to replace the deteriorating Dearborn Middle School building with a $73 million, state-of-the-art grade 6-12 STEM Academy that could provide a top-notch education to students in its under-served Roxbury neighborhood.

In 2018, Rev. Hamilton returned to Boston to attend Mayor Marty Walsh’s ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new school, but the celebration became a demand for action when, a few days prior to the school’s opening, many key staff positions remained unfunded. Nearly 225 GBIO leaders were present to demand full funding for the STEM school’s staffing. Since the opening, some positions have been filled and GBIO and Roxbury Presbyterian Church continue to monitor the progress.

Roxbury Somali women call on the City of Boston to make local playground safer for their children

House meetings of over 80 Somali mothers from the Roxbury and ISBCC community led to organizing to improve the safety, beauty, and playground equipment at the local Jeep Jones Park situated on the hill above the ISBCC mosque. After leaders met with City Councilor Kim Janey, the Parks Department filled the potholes in the playground, removed encroaching branches and cleaned the park.

At GBIO’s October in front of Councilor Janey and 1,487 GBIO members, Firdosa Hassan, a neighborhood resident and mother, along with Steve Mitchell, a Timilty School administrator, told the story of children playing on an unfenced cliff. Councilor Janey answered their call to become the ‘champion of Jeep Jones Park’ and to push the City to fund capital improvements. Councilor Janey organized a walk-through with Boston’s Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space, Christopher Cook, and is currently negotiating with the Mayor’s Office to put Jeep Jones Park into the city’s upcoming capital budget.
In 2014, GBIO launched the GBIO Impact Fund to raise money from individual donors in our congregations and communities who wanted to support GBIO.

**IMPACT FUND INDIVIDUAL DONORS**

Each year we conduct an Individual Donor Campaign. We are grateful for the support of our 2018 donors. **Thank you GBIO Donors!**

WE ARE ALSO GRATEFUL TO OUR GENEROUS FOUNDATION AND CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

**Foundation Grants:** Catholic Campaign for Human Development | Herman and Frieda L. Miller Foundation | The Hyams Foundation, Inc. | The Needmor Fund

**Corporate Support:** Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center | Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

HOW CAN I GIVE?

GBIO has accomplished so much for Greater Boston, but we have the potential and the power to do much more. Please consider a tax-deductible donation so that we can continue to build people power. Consider a recurring gift installment every month by giving online at [www.gbio.org](http://www.gbio.org).

Or you may mail your contribution using the envelope provided.

Thank you for considering a contribution to GBIO.
GBIO FINANCES
HOW WE ARE FUNDED

GBIO is funded by dues from member groups, individual donations, corporate donors and foundations. The current annual budget pays for two full-time and three part-time staff, who guide and serve the member organizations. The budget also funds the training of our volunteer leaders each year and covers expenses associated with operating issue campaigns.

In order to remain autonomous and politically independent, GBIO does not accept government funds.

GBIO REVENUE

- FOUNDATION GRANTS – $208,360
- MEMBER DUES – $155,062
- IMPACT FUND/INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS – $122,319
- CORPORATE DONATIONS – $25,000
- OTHER – $2,782

GBIO USE OF FUNDS

- ORGANIZERS & SUPPORT TEAM – $392,482
- ADMINISTRATION COSTS – $73,210
- CONSULTING – $57,000
- RENT/UTILITIES/TECHNOLOGY, PHONE – $18,129
ORGANIZERS

Kathleen Patrón
Lead Organizer

Zienab Abdelgany
Organizer

Fran Early
Volunteer Organizer

SUPPORT STAFF

Jessica Adler
Office Manager

Eden Williams
Bookkeeper

Larry Gordon
Lead Organizer emeritus

Rev. Bernadette Hickman-Maynard
Organizer emeritus

2018 Strategy Team

Serving as GBIO’s Board of Directors, leaders from our member organizations are elected to serve three-year terms on the Strategy Team. The Strategy Team authorizes the initiation of new issue campaigns, reviews the progress of current campaigns, and attends to financial and structural aspects of the organization.

MEMBERS

Ms. Barbara Berke
Dr. Jeanette Callahan
Rev. John Edgerton
Mr. Alan Epstein
Ms. Bonny Gilbert
Ms. Fran Godine
Rev. Ray Hammond
Mr. Chuck Koplik
Ms. Nahma Nadich
Ms. Faith Perry
Ms. Jumaada Smith
Rev. Burns Stanfield
Rev. Liz Walker
Ms. Beverly Williams

Temple Israel, Boston
Bethel AME Church, Jamaica Plain
Old South Church, Boston
Congregation Dorshel Tzedek, Newton
Temple Sinai, Brookline
Temple Israel, Boston
Bethel AME Church, Jamaica Plain
Temple Isaiah, Lexington
Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston
Church of the Covenant, Boston
St. Katharine Drexel Parish, Roxbury
Fourth Presbyterian Church, South Boston
Roxbury Presbyterian Church, Roxbury
Bethel AME Church, Jamaica Plain

A big thank you to the team that created this year’s annual report:
GBIO Leaders Andy Zucker, Barbara Berke, Chuck Koplik.

Special thanks to creative design by: Kevin McGeen and Jonathan Gundlach
Headshots: Leslie Jackson
Photography: Hajjah Kamara, Nadya Middleton-Red Star Photography and Design
2018 Member Organizations
Dues paying member organizations make up our political power in Greater Boston. Leaders from each organization create and shape our issue campaigns and participate in a variety of ways, depending on their interests, talents and passions.

Current Member Organizations
Beth El Temple Center, Belmont
Bethel AME Church, Jamaica Plain
Church of the Covenant, Boston
Congregation Dorshei Tzedek, Newton
First Church Boston, Unitarian Universalist
First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, UCC
First Parish Cambridge, Unitarian Universalist
Fourth Presbyterian Church, South Boston
Grant AME Church, South End
Hancock United Church of Christ, Lexington
Hillel B’nai Torah, West Roxbury
Hope Central Church
Hyde Park Presbyterian
Islamic Council of New England
Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center, Roxbury
Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action
Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston
Keke Financial Group
Lutheran Church of the Newtons
Kavod, Boston
Nehar Shalom Community Synagogue, Jamaica Plain
Old South Church, Boston
Reservoir Church, North Cambridge
Resurrection Lutheran Church, Roxbury
Roxbury Presbyterian Church
St. James Episcopal Church, Cambridge
St. Katharine Drexel Parish, Roxbury
St. Paul AME, Cambridge
Temple Beth Elohim, Wellesley
Temple Beth Zion, Brookline
Temple B’nai Brith, Somerville
Temple Emanuel, Newton
Temple Isaiah, Lexington
Temple Israel, Boston
Temple Oheb Shalom, Brookline
Temple Shir Tikvah, Winchester
Temple Sinai, Brookline
Trinity Church, Boston
Union Church of Waban
University Lutheran Association of Boston
Workmen’s Circle

Are you interested in becoming a GBIO member?
Is your organization interested in joining GBIO?
Email us at GBIOLeaders@gmail.com and we’ll get in touch with you.