



Greetings! ,

The world looks much different than it did since the last newsletter I published, but one thing that remains true is that LBFE is still here. We are still relieving loneliness and connecting older and younger people together through friendship. Our volunteers are making regular social calls to older adults across the city, [the community is sharing video messages of hope and cheer](#), our students are hosting virtual CitySites programs, we are collaborating with the City and other elder services organizations to ensure that help is there when someone needs it. Our community is strong, and because friends like you, we are still here.

One thing I've been thinking about these past few weeks is a common phrase I hear from older adults. As I welcome and greet folks at our programs, inevitably someone responds to "It's so good to see you!" with the phrase "it's good to be seen." I had never heard this phrase before working at LBFE, and I have always found it a cute reply but never thought much more about it. Recently, on my 647th walk through my neighborhood this month, I passed a good friend's home and had my first in-person (at a safe distance) conversation in weeks. When he said to me "it's good to see you" I felt the profound meaning in the reply "it's good to be seen". My heart ached, suddenly realizing that each time someone responded to my simple greeting they were telling me a bigger story of loneliness. This pandemic is showing us how important it is for our well-being to be seen.

We are all changing the way we interact with the world and the people in it. We've picked up the phone more often, [some have started creating art and music together at a distance](#) and we've starting living for virtual family video chats and happy hours. While we are fortunate to live in an age where we can stay connected even when apart, this is not true for all of us. [According to a Pew Research study](#), only about half of adults over age 65 have smartphones, and fewer have tablets or laptops. Often older adults who do own tech devices report that they do not use them either because they don't know how.

Having seen the digital divide on full display these last few months, LBFE has made a commitment to improve tech access and tech literacy to older adults in our community. This month we were recipients of 100 new tablets with 3 months of prepaid data plans thanks to a generous donation from the City of Boston and Age Strong Commission. Our staff, board, volunteers, and community partners have been working hard to prepare and distribute these tablets to our program participants. We are bringing our intergenerational CitySites program back to life after a brief hiatus through technology and virtual meetings. Despite the learning curve and navigating technical difficulties, for the folks joining in on the activities one thing is true: it's good to be seen.

Warmly,

Nikki Shults
Executive Director



Meet LBFE's new Director of Development, Robert Guthrie

Robert believes that all older adults are our grandparents, regardless if we're related to them or not. They've been our teachers, doctors, crossing guards, and bus drivers. We wouldn't be here today without them. This is why Robert is focusing his 25 years of fundraising experience on helping LBFE build a community to help relieve the isolation and loneliness among older adults.



He grew up in Sudbury, chose college in Chicago, worked in Japan, and achieved his childhood dream of moving permanently to Cambridge where he can walk to the grocery store. He has helped sustain the mid-sized organizations of Perkins School for the Blind and Mystic Valley Elder Services, in addition to smaller places helping homeless families and foster children.

Robert is thrilled to be helping the family LBFE grow. He believes it's not just older adults who need us. We all need one another. We are better when older adults are in our lives.

Please join me in welcoming Robert to the family! He can be reached at rguthrie.bos@littlebrothers.org

Introducing the LBFE Circle of Compassion

We are thrilled to announce our new Circle of Compassion! This group of leadership donors have given at least \$500 during this fiscal year to relieve isolation and loneliness and to build a vibrant intergenerational community. All donations count toward membership

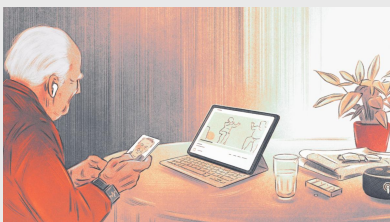


including: responses to mail, or online appeals, gifts toward our Friends of the Harbor event, or in memory/honor of others. Thank you, Circle of Compassion members, for investing in the richness of life that everyone deserves.

[Email Robert for more information](#)

Thank You!

LBFE extends a special "Thank You!" for the incredible support from our community during this trying time. Special recognition goes out to the Liberty Mutual Foundation, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation, the Grimes King Foundation, Eastern Bank, and the Age Strong Commission for your COVID19 Response support.



The "New Normal" for Many Older Adults is on the Internet

from City Lab

[In this article on City Lab](#), Linda Poon and Sarah Holder discuss the reality that older

adults will most likely remain under physical distancing recommendations much longer than the rest of society. In that time, many older adults will look to technology as a lifeline for social connection. LBFE Boston is currently exploring ways to help older adults break past the digital divide.

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