

RESPOND, II

Spring 2009 Volume 18, Number 1

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends.

Wherever I go these days, I see

the impact of the

enced some level



current economic climate. Indeed, it is hard to find someone who hasn't experi-Jessica C. Brayden

of hardship as a result of the downturn.

You might expect, therefore, that I would write about how RESPOND and the families we serve have been adversely affected by the current economic crisis. But day in and day out, RESPOND works to help families overcome struggles that far exceed the economic challenges that many of us face. And while financial crises can certainly have a profound influence on domestic violence, the work we do continues even as other changes occur around us.

Unfortunately, the need for our services is greater than ever. These past four months, RESPOND has seen a 200% increase in calls to our 24-hour hotline, answering 1,860 since October alone. Yet, just the other day I watched a family that had been with us for four months leave our shelter and move into their new home, free from the threat and harm of domestic violence. I can tell you that it was much more difficult for me to get worked up over the state of my investments that night after I saw the joy and hope on the faces of that family.

One of the biggest challenges we face as an organization is the impact that economic hardships can have upon people's ability and interest in giving to worthy causes. But times like these often force us to take stock of

RESPOND's Autumn Awakening Marks 5th Year of Success

Pegasystems Lead Sponsor





Left: Board president Colby Brunt, Jim Boudreaux, gala committee member Ellen Slawsby Boudreaux, The Revered Dr. Barbara Nielsen and gala special projects chair Mary Sara Pipia. Right: Awardee Tim Fidgeon, Trustee of the Parlin Trust, accepting award from Jessica C. Brayden

ESPOND welcomed 250 guests at the Harvest Moon Gala fundraiser on Friday, October 24, 2008, at the Cambridge Marriott Hotel in Kendall Square. The evening brought together longtime supporters, funders, corporate and nonprofit partners, government officials and many new friends who helped RESPOND raise nearly \$100,000 to support programs for survivors of domestic violence and their children.

Gala Chair Elizabeth Grace and her dedicated committee of volunteers orchestrated the festivities, kicking off with a cocktail hour and silent auction. Guests enjoyed drinks and hors d'oeuvres as they bid on over 50 spectacular silent auction packages that included everything from sports tickets and restaurant gift certificates to original artwork and fine wines from an exclusive California vineyard. That was followed by dinner, live music by the seven-piece band the Allnighters and a live auction.

RESPOND Board President Colby Brunt and Bob Gay of the Allnighters rallied the spirited crowd, auctioning a week in St. Croix, a luxury weekend at the Liberty Hotel in Boston, premium Celtics tickets and a one-of-a-kind New England Patriots experience—attending a game with former Patriot Jim Boudreaux, tailgating and meeting other veteran players at the Stadium Club. A beautiful Akoya pearl necklace with a diamond clasp was generously donated by Iridesse Pearls for the evening's raffle. The live and silent auctions, raffle, mystery prizes and Fund a Need auction raised a total of over \$20,000.

"Elizabeth Grace and the entire Gala Committee did a phenomenal job with every last detail," said Development Director Daniele Levine. "They gave so generously of their time and lent so much talent and expertise. I really can't say enough about their contribution." Executive Director Jessica Brayden added, "Our Gala Committee and sponsors step up year after year to help make it all possible. I hope they realize that their loyalty and commitment really does help us to save lives day in and day out.

Please continue to page 2. >

Community Comes Together for Annual Candlelight Vigil

n Tuesday, October 7, members of the community gathered to remember victims and honor survivors of domestic violence in Davis Square. The Candlelight Vigil, co-sponsored by RESPOND and the Somerville Women's Commission, is held each October as part of national domestic violence awareness month in October.

Speakers included a brave survivor of domestic violence who told her story of abuse, along with Somerville Mayor Joseph Curtatone, Somerville Chief of Police Anthony Holloway, Jessica Brayden, executive director of RESPOND and Sonja Darai, acting executive director of the Somerville Women's Commission. As candles were lit, RESPOND advocates Tarshe and Glennys read the names of each woman, man and child who lost their life as a result of domestic violence incidents during the year.

"It's such an important time for us to come together as a community to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives to domestic violence and to renew our commitment to ending the cycle of abuse," said Ms. Brayden. "Domestic violence affects all of us."

Driven by the recent dramatic rise in domestic violence homicides, Governor Deval Patrick directed the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to issue a public health advisory in 2008, identifying domestic violence as a "public health emergency." The Governor called on state government and members of the community to come together to increase awareness and prevention efforts. In response, RESPOND recently co-sponsored the development of two new innovative High Risk Assessment Teams in Somerville and Cambridge, bringing together local domestic violence service providers, local law enforcement officials, the district attorney's office, healthcare providers, and the Department of Children and Families to create wellorganized systems for coordinating a rapid response in dangerous cases of domestic violence.

Since 2005, the domestic violence homicide rate in Massachusetts has increased by nearly 200%. In 2007, there were 42 domestic violence homicides and 13 related suicides in the Commonwealth for a total of 55 deaths. Thirtyone children were directly impacted by domestic violence homicides—five children were killed, 13 orphaned, 11 lost their mother, and two lost their father. In 2008, there were 25 domestic violence homicides and 10 related perpetrator suicides for a total of 35 deaths. In January and February of 2009, there have been four confirmed domestic violence homicides that have left at least seven children without one or both parents.

The Sarah Hancock Internship

The Sarah Hancock Internship has been established in honor of longtime RESPOND supporter, Sarah Hancock, whose generous contributions have assisted RESPOND in doubling the capacity of its emergency shelter, supported community programming and helped to enhance services for victims of domestic violence and their children.

The internship will be awarded annually to a deserving undergraduate college student committed to providing direct services to RESPOND survivors of domestic violence. Interested candidates should email a resume and cover letter to Michelle Fine at michellef@respondinc.org. ■



Sarah Hancock

LETTER continued from page 1.

It is wonderful to see how so many have looked beyond their own struggles to support the work we do.

what is really important and refocus ourselves on those priorities. That has certainly been the case for RESPOND. Our donors, volunteers and supporters, despite their own hardships, have continued to give of their time, treasure and talents to help RESPOND change our communities and the lives of the families we serve. And for this I am deeply grateful.

It is wonderful to see how so many have looked beyond their own struggles to support the work we do. And it is even more heartwarming to see how that support has helped families overcome the scourge of domestic violence. The needs of our communities remain great, but RESPOND has not wavered in its commitment and effort to end the impact of domestic violence. Gratefully,

> Jessica C. Brayden **Executive Director**

RESPOND, Inc. **Board of Directors**

Colby C. Brunt, President Mary Reece, Vice President Jeffrey L. Kellem, Treasurer Lydia Rios, Clerk Hanishi Ali Jean R. Brodnax Io C. Cyrus Julia Devanthéry Edward F. Dombroski, Jr. Kathleen Donahue Eric Fellinger Gladys M. Gibbs Margot Kaplan-Sanoff Elizabeth Tyminski Mark Zelermyer Jessica C. Brayden, Executive Director

Holiday Wish List Program

This year, thanks to our generous donors, supporters and community members, RESPOND was able to meet the holiday wishes and needs of over 90 families affected by domestic violence.

As she picked up gifts donated by her sponsor, including a bike for her nine-year-old daughter, a mother of three was moved to tears. "My daughter wanted more than anything to have a bike for Christmas. Because I was laid off from my job, I had to have a very difficult conversation with her and let her know that I would not be able to provide that gift for her this holiday season because I could not afford it. We spoke about scaling down on our gifts this year and focusing on the important reasons of the season—being safe and together as a family. I just can't believe the generosity of our sponsor and the fact that they made my daughter's dream come true. I am so grateful...words cannot express how thankful I am." The bike had been delivered just a day before by the donor who was excited to fulfill this young girl's wish.

This is just one experience among many that staff were lucky to witness this holiday season. Program participants who came to pick up their gifts often cried out in shock and delight seeing the lengths complete strangers went to help them. "We have been deeply moved, especially in the current economic climate, by our truly wonderful wish list sponsors," said Executive Director Jessica C. Brayden. "Not only did families receive special gifts, but sponsors provided real necessities—food, warm blankets, winter coats and gift certificates for pharmacies, groceries and transportation. The daily need for these basic items is enormous, especially right now."

Time and time again, RESPOND has benefited from an outpouring of generosity from community members who want to brighten the season for others in need—St. Clement's



Citizens Bank's Holiday Drive—I to r: Jeanette Repucci, Daniele Levine of RESPOND, Denise Lamas, Michelle Fine of RESPOND and Susan Laforte.



RESPOND Executive Director Jessica C. Brayden (second from left) with Sally Ngao, Ed Mahoney, Alex Bourgeois, Carol Liedes and Ellen Ziegler all of the Finance Division at Tufts University which sponsored ten RESPOND Wish List families.



Jessica C. Brayden and Director of Programs and Service Michelle Fine with Lynn Engle, Jane Jones, and Debe Holland all members of the Winchester holiday shopping group who brightened the holidays with an abundance of gifts for RESPOND families.

Church, Tufts Finance and Development Divisions, St. Ann's Church, Harvard University and the Weatherhead Center, Citizen's Bank, Home Depot, Neighborhood Health Plan, the Roche Family, a dynamic team of loyal Winchester families as well as many other dedicated individual supporters and community groups.

"The loyalty of our donors is unheard of—and so precious," said Development Director Daniele Levine. "Thanks to each of them, everyone receiving services through the community and shelter-based programs at RESPOND who completed a Wish List request received gifts and basic necessities this holiday season."

Ms. Brayden added, "This time of year can be so difficult for families in crisis. Knowing that the community cares means the world."

Thank you to everyone who was part of 2008's inspirational efforts. Please visit www.respondinc.org/holidays2008 for a complete list of Wish List donors. ■

Gala continuted from page 1.



Max Mayer, Senior Vice President, Corporate Development of lead gala sponsor Pegasystems Inc. with colleague.



Kendra Chencus and Kurt Somerville.

We are especially grateful to Pegasystems for exceeding every expectation this year as our lead sponsor."

RESPOND proudly honored three awardees for their outstanding contributions to RESPOND and to ending domestic violence. The Timothy White Take a Stand Award was presented to Ron Bonney, Jr., Chair of the Somerville Chamber of Commerce and President of Bonney Automotive; the Rita Bourgeois Leadership Award went to the Albert N. Parlin Trust; and the Marie Siraco Community Activism Award was given to Detective Martha Costa of the Domestic Violence Unit at the Somerville Police Department.

Gala guests included Max Mayer, vice president of corporate development at lead sponsor Pegasystems; members of the leadership team at five-time gala

2008 Harvest Moon Gala Awardees

- The Albert N. Parlin Trust was the lead donor (and first pledge) to the agency's recent \$2.5 million capital campaign. "We can say today that RESPOND is helping twice as many survivors of domestic abuse and their children reach safety and rebuild their lives thanks to the Parlin Trust's vision and generosity," said Executive Director, Jessica C. Brayden.
- Ron Bonney, Jr. was moved by the tragic loss of his younger sister Brandy Rae Bonney to domestic violence, to come to the aid of survivors. Through his business Bonney Automotive, Mr. Bonney provides free cab rides to local individuals and their families who are fleeing domestic violence by helping them at any time reach emergency shelters, hospitals, local courts, and other potentially life-saving destinations. "The service is a huge help to survivors, giving people a secure way to get where they need to go to stay safe and healthy," said RESPOND's Shelter Coordinator, Victoria. "It's powerful—no questions asked, they just provide the

ride any time, day or night." The Bonney Family has also awarded four scholarships to Somerville High School graduates in Brandy's name and require recipients to perform community service at RESPOND.

• Detective Martha Costa, a 20-year veteran of the Somerville Police Department, has worked in the domestic violence unit since 1993. Throughout this time, she has advocated tirelessly for survivors and their families. "Detective Costa goes above and beyond to help local women and children find safety and get the support they need," said RESPOND's Director of Programs and Services, Michelle Fine. "She has been an incredible resource for RESPOND and for the community." ■



Det. Martha Costa

sponsor Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston and first-time sponsor Citizens Bank; Winter Hill Bank President and sponsor Sandra McGoldrick; State Representative, the Honorable Tim Toomey; Tammy Mello, Joshua Lubbers and Christopher Newman from RESPOND's lead funder, the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families; one of RESPOND's first staff members, Marie Siraco; former board presidents Rita Bourgeois and Kendra Chencus; Sheridan Haines, executive director of the Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence; Mary Fifield, president of Bunker Hill College; Toni Troop of Jane Doe Inc., the Mass Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence; and many other distinguished friends of RESPOND.

"The gala is such an important night for RESPOND," said Board President Colby Brunt. "We truly value the opportunity to connect with our incredible community of supporters and acknowledge the great works of our awardees who are helping survivors of domestic violence in significant ways." ■



Marie Siraco, Michele Goody and Debbie Gavin.



Gala Committee

Elizabeth Grace, Chair Elizabeth Tyminski, Auction Chair Abby Motejl and Elisa Thomas, Marketing Chairs Mary Sara Pipia, Special Projects Chair Mary-Jo Adams Jamie Barth Penny Cataldo Steve Chin Audra Dainora Paige Esser Hilary Forbes Erin Harrington Laura James Denise Lamas Erica Levine Julie Manzi Paula Renzi Gibbs

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Jessica C. Brayden Eastern Charitable Bank Foundation Marie Hickey Somerville Housing Authority

Table Captains

Colby C. Brunt Bunker Hill Community College The Hon. Joseph A. Curtatone Hemenway & Barnes Margot Kaplan-Sanoff and Robby Sanoff Kirby Lunger and Mike Dobbert Dr. Lydia Rios and Paul Cataldo

Patrons

Elizabeth Tyminiski

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Boston Marriott Cambridge Converse Maxx Travel

Auction and

Bangs Hair Design

Beacon Hill Bistro

In-Kind Donors Special thanks to the individuals, businesses, and institutions who contributed incredible gifts to raise much-needed funds to sustain RESPOND's essential services. 2 BellaBlue Design 5 Wits Sarah Alexander altTHERA Health Anjaly Atmosphere Personal Organizing Audra Dainora

Beauty Mark Blackstones Boston Athenaeum Boston Beer Company/ Sam Adams Boston Red Sox Ellen Slawsby Boudreaux and James Lee Boudreaux **Bow Street Flowers** The Charles Hotel Clarks Companies N.A. The Crop Shop Daily St. Grill Dunn & Dunn, Attorneys at Law Gail Eckberg-Ferguson The Elephant Walk Paige Esser Excelsior Sarah Ferguson - Ruff n' Roll Ficksam & Conley LLP Foster & Eldridge Rich Gotham - President, **Boston Celtics** Gourmet Gift Baskets Greg Case Harmon Golf Harpoon Brewery Healthworks Holiday Boutique Hot Chocolate Hotel Marlowe Iridesse Pearls Jimi James Salon Jose's Mexican Restaurant Jeff Kellem Mike Kelley & Elizabeth Tyminski Kowloon Restaurant Kristin Mary Gleason Photography Evan Kushhner, Esq. La Cense Beef Le Meridien Cambridge The Liberty Hotel Boston

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Special thanks also go to:

- · Suzanne Lunny and Pam Earle for their beautiful pro-bono design of event materials including the invitation and program
- Denise Lamas, Citizens Bank Community Sabbatical Intern for her phenomenal assistance.
- The Junior League of Boston for the evening's wonderful volunteers.
- · Citizens Bank for underwriting the cost of printing the gala program book.
- · Ingaldsby Farm for donating baby pumpkins for the mystery prizes.
- The staff at the Boston Marriott Hotel Cambridge for their professionalism and grace.
- · And to all our past gala chairs and committee members for helping us to build this signature fundraiser.

Inside RESPOND: Profile of Legal Support Services

or survivors of domestic violence, legal issues are often a major hurdle on the road to safety. Whether seeking a restraining order, dealing with divorce and child custody or facing immigration-related issues, survivors must navigate the complex legal system, a process that can be long, confusing and sometimes frightening. Non-English-speaking victims face added cultural and language barriers.

On a typical day, a RESPOND advocate might assist anywhere from three to six individuals to apply for restraining orders, complete paperwork related to child custody and divorce proceedings and provide crisis counseling, emotional support, safety planning, referrals and an orientation to the court system. Advocates will sit with victims to help them write a required narrative documenting their history of abuse. Then a waiting process begins that can take Program, often cross-referring clients and coordinating services for victims of domestic violence. "RESPOND's services and the services provided by the Victim Witness Advocate Program are stronger, more efficient and more effective because of our intensive collaboration," said RESPOND's Director of Programs and Services, Michelle Fine. RESPOND Community Advocates also work closely with local law enforcement, in particular the domestic violence unit at the

During the past six months at RESPOND:

Staff spent over 226 hours in the Somerville and Malden district courts assisting individuals in need.

Staff helped 96 individuals secure temporary and permanent restraining orders.

An additional 185 program participants were accompanied to court appointments in Somerville, Malden, Woburn and other local courts.

RESPOND's three experienced fulltime bilingual/bicultural community advocates devote an average of 30 percent of their time to assisting survivors of domestic violence with their legal needs. Every week, advocates provide on-site support to survivors in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole and French at the Malden and Somerville district courts. With the help of generous funding from the Boston Bar Foundation and a Violence Against Women Act S.T.O.P. grant, RESPOND has been able to expand legal support services during the past two years to include court accompaniment for existing program participants.

"Imagine the scene—you're already in a very traumatic situation. You walk into this huge imposing government building where the atmosphere is chaotic with lawyers, clients and court officials running around. Just figuring out which office to go to for a restraining order is intimidating," said RESPOND Advocate Tarshe. "And then to have to fill out pages of paperwork and re-tell your very personal story of abuse in a room filled with complete strangers—the whole process can be incredibly scary. Add a language barrier to the mix and victims can feel utterly lost."

anywhere from one to four hours. Once a victim is called before a judge, a RESPOND advocate literally stands next to them while the judge publicly questions the victim about the details of their story. "Having someone by their side is so important," said Senior Advocate Glennys who recently stood by a victim who was so nervous when the judge asked her about her batterer that she froze completely. "I knew her story and was able to explain key details to the judge. He told us she never would have gotten the restraining order if she hadn't had that support." Judges often do not allow someone else to speak on behalf of a victim. It was only because of Glennys' strong reputation for integrity and the trust she has established with local judges that she was permitted to come forward and advocate for the survivor. Other particularly daunting but common court experiences for victims include having to face their batterer in the court room and, for non-English-speaking victims, waiting hours—or sometimes more—for one of a limited pool of court appointed interpreters to become available.

RESPOND is lucky to work closely with the Middlesex County District Attorney's Victim Witness Advocate Somerville Police Department. Other significant partnerships include RESPOND's work with Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) and Community Legal Services and Counseling Center (CLSACC), through which staff make and receive referrals, share resources and conduct cross-trainings for staff. Through a direct referral process, as soon as an advocate learns of a legal problem a program participant is facing, they immediately call senior staff at GBLS and initiate an expedited and personalized intake process that dramatically reduces the wait time for victims.

"Victims of domestic violence are not always comfortable reaching out to law enforcement for a variety of reasons," said Shawn MacMaster, Deputy Chief of Community Outreach and Training at the Middlesex County D.A.'s Victim Witness Services Bureau. "RESPOND provides an alternative outlet for victims in need of assistance." He added, "RE-SPOND plays a vital role in the public safety arena by working to keep victims safe through its court advocacy program—oftentimes working closely with our victim witness staff and assistant district attorneys to meet this goal."

A Tribute to Denise Lamas and Citizens Bank

We wish to express our gratitude to Denise Lamas of Citizens Bank who joined the RESPOND team full time in the fall as part of the Bank's innovative Community Sabbatical Program. During her time at RESPOND, Denise added incredible value to the agency and touched everyone she came into contact with—program participants, donors, staff, board, interns, gala committee members and the community at large. We are eternally grateful for her assistance and wish to convey our deepest thanks to Citizens Bank and the Community Sabbatical Program, a shining example of corporate giving and community engagement. ■

Procter & Gamble **Donates Furniture** to RESPOND

RESPOND wishes to thank the local offices at Procter & Gamble for a very generous donation of furniture for RESPOND's Community Service Center. These contributions have helped us to outfit and upgrade our waiting room space, conference room, counseling rooms and administrative offices.

Staff and Board



RESPOND is pleased to welcome our newest board members: Edward F. Dombroski, Jr., partner at the Boston law firm Travers Dombroski; Eric Fellinger, Somerville resident and senior transportation planner at Tetra Tech Rizzo in Framingham, MA; Gladys Gibbs, obstetrician and gynecologist with Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates; Julia Devanthéry, recent law school graduate; and Jean Brodnax, pediatrician at Children's Hospital and Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston. We thank our extraordinary departing board member, Kirby Lunger, for her many years of dedicated service. We bid farewell to Children Service Coordinator Nathan and warmly welcome children service coordinator, Silvia, shelter advocates, Sherry, Blair and Megan and interns Emily, Leigh Ann and Teresa.

Women on What RESPOND's Spanish Speaking Support Group Means to Them

"Friday's meetings are my incentive, where I get an injection of life, energy and resolve to face what is waiting for me day by day. I am listened to and I may give vent to all I have held in my heart."

"Coming to RESPOND's sessions has helped me to stay focused on my journey to become a self-sufficient woman after I decided to put an end to the abusive marriage I lived in for over 26 years. Sharing my experiences and listening to other women's stories is a strong support."

"Group for me, and the unconditional support I have received, has been the pillar where I have found a foundation to struggle and keep myself motivated to bring my baby and home ahead."

"I find myself living in a golden cage where I don't have any type of communication with anyone. I always wait for Friday to come so I can take part in this reunion.

Coming to group has calmed me down and I don't even think about ending things anymore...because I was at that desperate point. I have found a lot of help and understanding."

One Communications Donates Three Boston Marathon Charity Numbers to RESPOND

For the second year in a row, RESPOND is the lucky recipient of charity entries to the historic race thanks to One Communications. Three dedicated runners— Mike Kelly, Nicole Morales and Peter Young are busy training for the 26.2 mile race and raising funds to support RESPOND's programs. ■

Recent Fundraising Events

RESPOND wishes to express our gratitude to the energetic, creative groups and individuals who sponsored recent events to benefit RESPOND:

- Anjaly Clothing and the Newbury Street boutique Envy sponsored a Fashion Trunk Show.
- Longtime donor and volunteer Marina Seevak organized a block party in Cambridge.
- RESPOND Board member Elizabeth Tyminski hosted a Silpada Jewelry Party and Silpada representative Donna Gibbons donated all proceeds from sales to RESPOND. ■

SAVETHE DATE

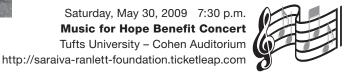


Saturday, May 2, 2009

12th Annual Tufts Graduate Student Council 5K Run/Walk for RESPOND

Registration at 10 a.m. Race begins at 11 a.m. http://ase.tufts.edu/gsc/5k/col.pdf

> Saturday, May 30, 2009 7:30 p.m. **Music for Hope Benefit Concert** Tufts University – Cohen Auditorium



With Gratitude to RESPOND's Donors

We extend our deepest thanks to the donors who made our new shelter possible and to everyone who helped RESPOND continue to save lives and educate the community in 2008. We apologize for any errors or omissions in the lists below —please let us know of corrections.

2008-2009 Institutional **Grant Funders**

MA Department of Children and Families

City of Somerville Community Block Development Grant

City of Somerville Emergency Shelter Grant

Violence Against Women Act S.T.O.P. Grant

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The Honorable Joseph A. Curtatone

Steve Grossman

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Cathy O'Dea

Jena Roy



Elizabeth O'Connor Bartlett, Public Affairs Manager at Citizens Bank and Denise Lamas, Commercial Loan Analyst at Citizens Bank and former Community Sabbatical intern, present RESPOND with a \$5,000 grant from the Citizens Bank Foundation.

RESPOND Annual Fund Donors

\$15,000 and Above

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\$2,500 - \$4,999

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Verizon Wireless Winter Hill Bank

\$1,000 - \$2,499

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Keith and Debra Gelb
Linda Hanson and Jonathan Wallach

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