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2016 Summer Sillerman Fellow  
The Boston Foundation

### **Sillerman Fellowship Reflection Paper**

[The Boston Foundation](#), one of the oldest and largest community foundations in the nation, serves as the primary philanthropy for Greater Boston and strives to ensure that all Greater Boston residents and communities are thriving through the management of charitable assets, funding nonprofit organizations, and serving as a civic leader and convener. As a Sillerman Fellow placed at the Foundation in the Donor Services department, I spent the summer of 2016 working on a number of projects. Under the purview of this department two Field of Interest funds reside, the Equality Fund and the Latino Legacy Fund. Field of Interest funds support particular areas of community life. The Equality Fund focuses on LGBTQ well-being in the Greater Boston area and the Latino Legacy Fund focuses on Greater Boston's Latino population. Both funds have advisory boards of local leaders in their respective areas and serve as grantmaking funds to nonprofits in Greater Boston while also establishing a permanent endowment that will strengthen and support their communities in the future. The majority of my work at the Foundation involved these two funds in a variety of different ways, culminating in multiple issue briefs and other documents.

At the beginning of my internship at the Foundation much of my time was spent familiarizing myself with the department I was housed in as well as with the Foundation as a whole. The first few weeks included department meetings, one-on-one meetings with most of the Donor Services team, meetings with those outside the Donor Services department who would impact my work on the two funds, as well as participation in two site visits for the Latino Legacy Fund as a follow-up to grantees of the previous grant cycle. During this time I also began my research for the Equality Fund, examining relevant academic journals and media sources for content on the current status of the LGBTQ community, both nationally and in Greater Boston.

As the number of internal meetings lessened I began to work on a prospect list for the Latino Legacy Fund. This process involved identifying key stakeholders in the Latino community or those involved in Latino-focused work. The completed document was presented to the Advisory Committee for review to steward new contributions to the Latino Legacy Fund. Around the same time planning for the upcoming Latino Legacy Fund convening was taking place. The purpose of the convening is to bring together the Latino community of Greater Boston to elevate issues, opportunities, and challenges facing the Latino Community. The convening

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will also reinforce the high-impact role that Greater Boston's Latinos will play in the region's future as a growing and vibrant population. Over the summer I supported in meetings and in document preparation for planning meetings for the convening. I created an annotated bibliography of relevant research and publications regarding the Latino community in Greater Boston. This document was presented to the Advisory Committee and relevant Foundation staff.

My work with the Latino Legacy Fund also included taking part in an Internal Review Committee for the Fund's newly created Innovation Fund grantmaking initiative. This experience was of particular interest to me as my previous experience with grants involved the other side of the equation, applying for funds to support a program. Being involved in the review process was a new way for me to experience philanthropy. My time at the Foundation was supervised by a Donor Services Officer, who leads point on the Latino Legacy Fund. She provided consistent support and counsel not only for my work with the Latino Legacy Fund but also on my work with the Equality Fund.

The research for the Equality Fund was an ongoing project throughout my summer fellowship. I began my research by taking advantage of my access to peer-reviewed journals through Brandeis University and tracked media coverage of the LGBTQ community. This research informed the topics of the issue briefs I developed for the Equality Fund's Advisory Committee. I spoke with LGBTQ stakeholders throughout Greater Boston, including the Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth and the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless. By the end of the summer I presented three issue briefs covering LGBTQ Aging, LGBTQ Homelessness, and the unique identity and needs of the Transgender community.

The main challenge during my fellowship was the scarcity of time to complete some very large tasks. This holds particularly true for the Equality Fund research project and for the support of the Latino Legacy Fund's planned convening. As such, with the generous continued support of The Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy and The Boston Foundation I will be extending my summer fellowship into the Fall Semester. I am excited to continue in this work and to build stronger connections with the Foundation's staff. My experience with philanthropy up until this fellowship has been through my role as a grantee. Seeing all the work that goes into the development of Request for Proposals, of the careful review of applications, and into the strong role that community foundations play outside of grantmaking has been a great experience.