



ABCD Press

From the Office of Public Information

Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. - 178 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02111

(617) 348 - 6241 - Fax: (617) 482 - 4859

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 22, 2009

Contact:

Susan Kooperstein
617-348-6241
617-875-3619 (cell)
Victor Kakulu
617-348-6244

ABCD Board Appoints John Drew New President/CEO

The ABCD Board of Directors last night voted to appoint ABCD Executive Vice President John Drew as the new President/CEO of Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD), Boston's antipoverty agency.

Drew has served as ABCD Executive Vice President, second in command at the agency, for more than 20 years.

Juliette Mayers, ABCD Board Chairperson, noted that Drew's appointment is the right decision at this crucial juncture in the history of this 45-year-old agency which serves more than 100,000 low-income, disadvantaged individuals and families.

"We are extremely fortunate to have John Drew, who has served on the front lines at ABCD for many years and through extremely challenging times, to lead ABCD at this time," Mayers said. "John has the leadership skills, political acumen and community support in place to bring ABCD to even greater heights in fulfilling its important mission of providing Boston's low-income people and neighborhoods with pathways out of poverty and opportunities for better lives."

Drew expressed his appreciation for the Board's confidence in him and said he was ready lead the agency in a time of both economic challenges and significant opportunities. Drew has been in charge at ABCD since longtime President/CEO Bob Coard was hospitalized in July and announced his retirement for November 1, 2009. Drew has been recently praised for his excellent management of economic stimulus funds awarded to the agency for weatherization, job development, Head Start expansion and housing/homelessness prevention.

"I am very grateful to Board Chairperson Juliette Mayers and the entire committed Board of Directors for their dedication to ABCD and the important work of the agency," he said. "It is both humbling and inspiring to be their choice for President/CEO of this very significant organization. At ABCD, we will continue and expand the all-important

services and opportunities that enable low-income Boston-area residents to have hope and opportunity in their lives. We are ready to be creative and to move forward to continue to make a difference in people's lives!"

Drew has been a national figure and acknowledged leader in the community action movement for more than 30 years. He grew up in Charlestown, Massachusetts, experiencing the beginnings of the antipoverty movement as a resident of public housing and a Head Start parent. He is a graduate of Bentley College and completed his MBA at Suffolk University, and is a Certified Public Accountant. Drew held many roles at ABCD including Budget Director, Deputy Director and Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer.

In addition to helping guide the growth of ABCD, Drew rapidly emerged as a leader in the wider nonprofit arena. He is the founder and former President of the National Association for Administrative Excellence (NAFAE), an association that helped make significant advances in the business management of nonprofit agencies. He is a sought-after trainer and consultant, who lectures frequently to national audiences in the Community Action network.

As an adjunct professor at local colleges and universities including the Urban College of Boston, Drew shares his combination of practical expertise and academic learning with a range of students in public management programs. Drew has continued to support the principle of wider access to higher education, helping to nurture the Urban College Program at ABCD and serving as a Trustee of the Urban College of Boston since 1998.

Bob Coard will retire November 1 after heading the highly respected antipoverty agency for 41 years. His exceptional tenure will be celebrated on October 30 at the Annual ABCD Community Awards Dinner at the Boston Marriott Copley Place where more than 1,500 supporters will gather to pay tribute to Coard and 19 community volunteers.

About ABCD:

ABCD serves more than 100,000 low-income Boston-area residents through its central offices and a decentralized network of Neighborhood Service Centers (NSCs), Head Start centers, Family Planning sites and Foster Grandparent sites. Programs and affiliations include Fuel Assistance; Head Start; Child Care Services; Child Care Choices of Boston; Education; Career Development; Housing and Homelessness Services; Health Services; Family Planning; Urban College of Boston; University High – an Alternative High School; Ostiguy High School for high school students in recovery; Weatherization; Foster Grandparents; Elder Services; Intergenerational Programs; Food Pantries in several Boston neighborhoods; management of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), Commonwealth of Massachusetts Employees Charitable Campaign (COBECC) and City of Boston Employees Charitable Campaign (COBECC); advocacy and consumer services.

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