



Give
✦ ✦
Liberty
a hand

MIRA'S BIGGEST CELEBRATION AND FUNDRAISER



June 8th, 2023
Fairmont Copley Hotel

Program Booklet



GIVE LIBERTY A HAND

Welcome to the our annual *Give Liberty a Hand* celebration where we recognize champions for immigrants in our Commonwealth – leaders in government, business and advocacy who “give liberty a hand” by working to advance the rights and integration of immigrants and refugees.

EVENING AGENDA

6:00 PM

Cocktail Reception

7:00 PM

Music, Boston Children's Chorus

'Hands Are Knockin'

'Put A Little Love In Your Heart'

'Shine A Light'

Opening Remarks by Emcee, Marcela Garcia
Dinner

8:00 PM

Speaking Program

Special Video Presentation

Remarks from Executive Director Liz Sweet

Community Champion Award Presentation:

♦ The Driving Families Forward Coalition and the Yes on Four Campaign

♦ Representative Antonio Cabral

♦ Colette Phillips

Guest Speaker: Elizabeth Custodio

Spoken Word Artist: Rafael Arturo

9:00 PM

Closing Remarks: Marcela Garcia

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ART ACTIVISM

CELEBRATING THE WORK OF **HERSTORY IS**



The HSI Collective | Photo taken by Amir al-Azraki

Her Story Is Collective members:

Amy Merrill, Co-founder
Anne Loyer, Co-founder
Letta Neely
Jennifer Jean
Dr. Thawra Yousif
Thaira al-Mayahy
Jenan Mohammed
Dr. Hanaa Ahmed Mohamed
Elham Nasser al-Zabedy
Dr. Nadia AlEsi
Tamara al-Attiya
Abeer Abdulkareem



Artwork by Jinan Muhammed



Artwork by Thaira al-Mayahy

GLAH 2023

CONGRATULATIONS, FROM A LONG-TIME SUPPORTER,
Amy Merrill

Dear Gala attendees,

Like activism, art is a powerful force for social change.

I learned this from *'Her Story Is'*, a collective of women artists and writers in Iraq and the US, who share the joys and tragedies of the human condition against all odds. Our sisterhood inspires us to heal and grow from the war and upheaval, racism and phobias, and faulty media portrayals that threaten to "other" us.

Together, we salute the Driving Families Forward (DFF) Coalition in its success to make drivers' licenses available to all Massachusetts residents! You fought for each other with courage and solidarity, and your campaign transformed the ways in which immigrant communities can access care and support without fear; it's a win for all of us in the Commonwealth!

HSI recognizes the beautiful socio-cultural contributions that immigrants make in our society. Like DFF, we are storytellers for change, but we practice deep-listening and empathy rather than lobbying and advocacy. Our work of peaceful dialogue and creative collaboration is aimed at using artistic practices- painting, writing, and film-making- to uncover our common humanity.

The images included here are snapshots of our work. The images were created by Thaira al-Mayahy and Jenan Mohammed, and produced by Anne Loyer. Together, we congratulate all of the honorees and changemakers at the gala tonight!

with great admiration,



Her Story Is

حكايتها هي

Amy Merrill

MIRA Supporter, Playwright, Co-founder of *'Her Story Is'* (HSI)

THE DRIVING FAMILIES FORWARD COALITION AND YES ON FOUR CAMPAIGN



This year we have many successes to recognize, chief among them is the passage of the Work and Family Mobility Act which ensures all residents are able to obtain driver's licenses regardless of immigration status. This victory was the direct result of a tremendous effort by a diverse group, the Driving Families Forward Coalition and Yes on Four Campaign. Today we honor the leadership of this critical campaign with our Community Champion Award. Join us in shining a bright light on this group's accomplishments #drivingmaforward.

REPRESENTATIVE ANTONIO CABRAL



State Representative Antonio F. D. Cabral is one of the highest ranking Portuguese-American legislators in the country. Elected in November of 1990, Representative Cabral represents the 13th Bristol District of New Bedford in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Over the course of his career, more than 50 of his bills and legislative proposals have passed into law. He is currently the House Chair of the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight and leads the Gateway Cities Legislative Caucus and the Portuguese American Legislative Caucus.

Representative Cabral is a fierce advocate for immigrant and refugee rights in the State House. He was an early advocate for language access and drivers licenses for all and is a consistent of legislation and policies that aim to improve the lives of immigrants. Rep. Cabral consistently secures resources for community organizations in his district, such as MIRA member organization the Immigrants' Assistance Center.

COLETTE PHILLIPS



As founder and CEO of Colette Phillips Communications and Get Konnected!, Colette has been at the forefront of diversity and inclusion initiatives across the Greater Boston area. She has leveraged decades of expertise in strategic public relations and communications to forge a more inclusive ecosystem for Massachusetts' underrepresented communities by way of facilitating access to capital, professional development and social connection. These efforts have been recognized by the Boston Business Journal which awarded her their Lifetime Achievement Award, as well as Boston Magazine which named her among 2020's 100 Most Influential People.

Colette first arrived in Boston as an immigrant at 17 years old to pursue her education. MIRA Coalition recognizes her extraordinary contributions, as an immigrant herself, to uplift immigrants and people of color in our region and will be awarding her with the 2023 Community Champion Award.

*Boston Children's Chorus*

Boston Children's Chorus harnesses the power of music to connect our city's diverse communities, cultivate empathy, and inspire social inquiry. Named Boston's "Ambassadors of Harmony" by the Boston Globe, BCC presents over 50 performances per season in a wide range of public and private events.

They have performed in venues from Boston Symphony Hall, TD Garden, and Royal Albert Hall in London, to the Sydney Opera House, and the White House.

Website: bostonchildrenschorus.org | [@bostonchildrenschorus](https://twitter.com/bostonchildrenschorus)

*Arturo Shabazz*

Rafael Arturo Lugo (recently changed his artist name to Arturo Shabazz) is a multidisciplinary Afro-Latinx artist and poet from Dorchester, Massachusetts. Through his writing and visual arts, he tells stories that are rooted in struggle and oppression, urging you to dig deep within yourself. Shabazz has contributed articles to the Boston Compass, Morton Digital, and published his own zine called "The Negro Flower Series" with a collective of diverse contributors.

Email: rafaelarturo196@gmail.com | [@rafael_a_shabazz](https://twitter.com/rafael_a_shabazz)

*Marcela E. García*

Marcela García is an Associate Editor & Columnist at the Boston Globe, where she has been part of the op-ed and editorial pages since early 2014. Previously, she was a correspondent for Telemundo Boston, a special contributor to the Boston Business Journal, and the editor of El Planeta, Boston's largest Spanish-language publication.

Instagram & Twitter: [@marcela_elisa](https://twitter.com/marcela_elisa)

GLAH 2023

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Thank you to all of our amazing volunteers, the Fairmont Copley Hotel staff, Carol McKean Events and Last Minute Productions for all of your help in producing this event.



Thank you for joining us!

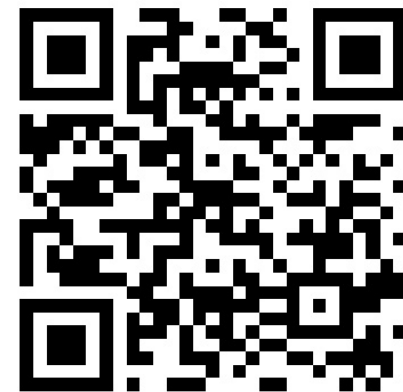
Want to continue to support
immigrant-friendly policies and promote civic
action in immigrant communities?

Consider donating to the MIRA Coalition!

Please visit bit.ly/MIRA2022Giving

-or-

Scan the QR code below.





Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition

*Thank you for sharing this special evening with us - we celebrate
your support of MIRA's work everyday!*

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