



October 2018

Greetings,

It's officially Fall and we hope you're enjoying the crisp air of the new season!

We've started orientation and FUNterviews at our schools and are excited for this **upcoming programming year**. We're also grateful that we've been awarded \$10,000 by **Eastern Bank** to continue to advance women leadership in our communities, and together were featured in a **Boston Neighborhood Network(BNN) interview** discussing our work and impact. Lastly, we've rebranded our flagship program, **Queens Rise(QR)**, and will have our kickoff on October 21st, so if you know young women ages 14 through 18, send them our way!

Thank you for always cheering us along,

Erika

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Erika", written in a cursive style.

Interim Executive Director

Sponsor Spotlight



The Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation serves as the charitable arm of Eastern Bank, contributing to the health and vitality of the communities we serve. In 2018, we expect to provide over \$8.0 million to more than 1,500 organizations throughout Greater Boston, Southern New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. These funds are directed at local efforts to ensure equal access to employment, education, healthcare, housing, childcare, healthy meals, and other human services. Since our inception in 1818, our focus has been about giving back to the communities we serve. Eastern's ongoing commitment to contributing 10% of its net income to charity each year reflects this unwavering commitment.

We support organizations providing services to the underserved and neediest members of our community. Each year we allocate approximately 20% of our annual giving to a specific area of focus with direct impact on our communities. For 2018, we are committing

over \$2.0 million to non-profit organizations focused on the advancement of women and girls. These grants will work to address a range of issues that disproportionately impact our wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters.

We were proud to honor Chica Project as a 2018 grant recipient. Their focus on inclusion and empowerment reflects our commitment to ensure that young women have the opportunity to pursue their personal and professional goals in a safe and supportive environment. We know that embracing the diversity of our communities enriches the opportunities and experiences for us all.



Watch **Nancy Stager**, *Eastern Bank Executive Vice President of Human Resources & Charitable Giving*, on **BNN** alongside **Erika Rodriguez**, *Chica Project Interim Executive Director*, discussing \$1.7 million in grants from the bank's charitable foundation and how this award helps advance the leadership of women in our communities, empowering them to take financial, personal, and professional steps towards independency and success.



Left to Right:
Chris Lovett, *Boston Neighborhood Network News Director*
Nancy Stager, *Eastern Bank Executive Vice President of Human Resources & Charitable Giving*
Erika Rodriguez, *Chica Project Interim Executive Director*



Left to Right:
Nancy Stager, *Eastern Bank Executive Vice President of Human Resources & Charitable Giving*
Erika Rodriguez, *Chica Project Interim Executive Director*
Andrea Goodman, *Eastern Bank Vice President of Public Relations & Communications*

That's a Chica!



Jessica Rodriguez is a native Bostonian and daughter to parents from El Salvador. She is an alumni of the Boston Public Schools (Rafael Hernandez & Fenway High School) where she received a Spanish bilingual education. She graduated from College of the Holy Cross in 2015 with a bachelor's degree in English and a concentration in Women's & Gender Studies. Never picturing herself in politics, she was encouraged to become civically engaged during her time volunteering with Chica Project. This push led her to take the position of Policy & Research Assistant in the office of Councilor Annessa Essaibi-George, and most recently she was named the new Chief of Staff. In her new role, Jessica is responsible for streamlining and delegating the work in the office and advising Councilor Essaibi-George on appropriate course of action. She attends all of the City Council meetings and is responsible in ensuring that the Councilor is prepared.

What have you done as a Chica Project volunteer?

I was one of the first volunteers to attend programming at Cathedral High School back in 2016. When I was present, I participated in the workshops and activities, assisted with set up, and supported the rest of the staff and volunteers. I was often challenged to step outside of my comfort zone and so, while I was there as a peer mentor, I saw myself growing personally and as a leader. It was amazing for me to see how sometimes I was the one being mentored by the young women. I continue to be a strong supporter of Chica Project and attend as many events as my schedule allows.

Why did you decide to become a Chica Project mentor?

I believe that mentorship is incredibly important. During my time at Holy Cross, I participated as a mentor and a tutor for the Girl's C.H.O.I.C.E (Choosing Hope, Opportunities, and Independence through Careers & Education) program at the Central Massachusetts YWCA in Worcester. After graduating, I came back to Boston and knew I wanted to continue participating in an organization or program that focuses on empowering, mentoring, and creating leadership opportunities for young women. I found Chica Project and immediately reached out. My life after that initial meeting changed and I was introduced to a path that I never knew I would walk down. However short my stay as a mentor with Chica Project was, it made a huge impact on my life and I continue to be incredibly grateful for being a part of the organization.

Opportunities

Chica Project's flagship program, **Queens Rise(QR)**, focuses on leadership development and cultural identity exploration through group mentoring. We are a cohort of powerful women who are resilient thinkers, dreamers and believers of ourselves and our communities.

- We meet every third Sunday of the month in Boston and Lynn.
- Our program is free and open to all young women who live in Massachusetts, ages 14 through 18.
- Once their application has been submitted, we'll send them the location and details.
- We'll provide free food and refreshments!

Please spread the word by referring young women to **apply** before our Friday, October 12th deadline!



Kickoff Event
Oct. 21
12-2pm
Queens Rise
We fix each other's crowns;
celebrating culture while
networking with other strong
women to empower our inner
queen.



Fill out an application at
www.chicaproject.org or email
diana@chicaproject.org for
location and more details.



Apply Here

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Memories from FALLabration

Thank you to all who celebrated with us, promoting our new staff, new look, and new season! A special thanks to our sponsor **Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation** and our consultants **Executive Success Corps**.





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614 Columbia Road, Unit Rear
Dorchester, MA 02125
Telephone: 617-922-7445

Email: info@chicaproject.org