

## **Avison Summaries 2024**

There were 18 applicants to the Avison Fund this year. In May 2024 the following organizations were funded at \$10,000 each.

**ALDEA** (stands for Advancing Local Development through Empowerment and Action) with a sister organization in Guatemala. This grant will be used for construction & materials for 31 sanitary latrines in El Rosario, Guatemala along with training for 80 families in use of the latrines, hygiene, health & protecting the environment in the rural villages. The project is designed to be locally sustainable. ALDEA targets projects to improve infant & toddler health. <https://aldeaguatemala.org>

**Convergence Ensemble** A small group of musicians and performers who are intent on bringing their program, American Voice in Poetry and Song, to students in Dorchester and Roxbury who have little exposure to classical music and may not have any awareness of the number of Black artists throughout the history of this country who have enriched the culture and remain unrecognized by the mainstream public. Their program involves three-day residencies in various schools where the artists conduct interactive musical education performances with 4th to 8th graders, followed by a free concert for the community. <https://www.convergenceensemble.org>

**First Teacher** located in the Roxbury, Dorchester & Mattapan communities of Boston. First Teacher provides bilingual school (kindergarten)/community readiness for 300 families with children 0-8 years old, including children & parent leadership programs. The project funds the implementation of a new client relationship management platform to inform, communicate & collect feedback in an interactive way between staff & families. <https://www.firstteacherboston.org>

**Friends Peace Teams** A widespread organization coordinating projects in areas where children face gang violence as well as domestic violence primarily by presenting workshops in schools, prisons and churches guided by the Alternatives To Violence projects. The specific grant proposal is to develop workshops and facilitators in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. One of the challenges for the entire organization has been to enable local people at the various sites to make most of the decisions, instead of distant board members in the US. <https://friendspeacetams.org>

**Science Club for Girls** has been funded to run a Summer Rocketry Program to promote STEM interest and careers in low-income, Latina, Black, and Indigenous girls and gender expansive youth from the Boston area. This program will serve middle and high school youth and includes robust evaluation of the program's effectiveness. <https://www.scienceclubforgirls.org>

**Sibling Connections** has been funded to expand their weekend retreats program for siblings separated by the Department of Children and Families system. They serve siblings across Massachusetts between the ages 7-20, representing all genders and ethnicities. [www.siblingconnections.org](http://www.siblingconnections.org)

**Straight Ahead Ministries** has been funded for job readiness training by partnering with Conrad Builds to create a three-month skills and apprentice mastery program in the construction industry. Justice-involved juveniles in the Metro Boston area

of any race, color, gender or creed who are committed to changing their trajectory are welcomed. <https://straightahead.org>

**The Children's Room** For more than 20 years the staff have run a variety of programs to support children, teens and adults grieving the loss of a family member. Twice a year they enroll 45 children, and 30 adult caregivers for 16 weekly sessions. Children work in their own groups on art projects and other forms of therapy while the adults spend their time sharing the problems they are having as parents while they learn how to be supportive to their children using evidence-based principles guided by a psychologist, social workers as well as 40 volunteers, all sharing some of the same life experiences as the participants. <https://childrensroom.org>