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BOSTON RISING LAUNCHES THE GROVE HALL TRUST, A 21ST CENTURY RESIDENT-LED NEIGHBORHOOD FOUNDATION

BOSTON, MASS.; **OCTOBER 17, 2011** – In the shadow of public demonstrations that are calling attention to national economic disparity, one local organization is taking concrete steps to fight poverty at its roots. Boston Rising, a fund to end the cycle of poverty in Boston, announced today that it has established the Grove Hall Trust, a first-of-its-kind, resident-led neighborhood foundation that puts choice and control for directing grant dollars directly in the hands of Grove Hall neighborhood residents and community leaders. The Grove Hall Trust is founded on two of Boston Rising’s core beliefs: communities know what they need to improve their outcomes, and sustainable impact comes from shared risk and responsibility.

The Grove Hall Trust is built upon the principles of pooling knowledge and resources, and fostering collaboration between families, the community and donors. The goal is to improve community capacity and leadership while increasing the flow of educational opportunities, jobs, capital and social connections that can help end the poverty cycle.

“The Grove Hall Trust is emblematic of the type of commitment to community co-investing and innovation that Boston Rising brings to ending poverty by clearing the way for the next Rising Class,” said Tiziana Dearing, CEO, Boston Rising. “The Trust will harness the energy, insights and enthusiasm of Grove Hall’s residents to support community initiatives and create measurable outcomes that will positively impact the neighborhood.”

Said Robert Lewis, Jr., vice president of The Boston Foundation, an authority on grantmaking in Boston, “This is an incredible investment with the people who make up Grove Hall - most philanthropic entities give from within. The Grove Hall Trust trusts the decision-making of its residents in making valuable and courageous decisions on the ground that impact the everyday quality of their lives.”

HOW THE GROVE HALL TRUST WORKS

The Trust is a fund established by Boston Rising, through an initial \$250,000 endowment, to be matched at ten percent by the Grove Hall community. The estimated community contribution of \$25,000 will be raised through Trust-approved activities and events. Boston Rising solicited Trustee applications from the community, and selected nine Grove Hall residents to serve as trustees for a 18-24 month term; exact term length will be determined by the Trustees themselves.

Trustees will assess grant applications and award a minimum of \$37,000 annually, to be awarded on a rolling basis. Grants will range from \$500 to \$5,000. Nonprofit 501(c)3 organizations as well as unaffiliated residents with great ideas will be encouraged to apply. In keeping with the spirit of co-investment, all applications will be required to include a dollar-for-dollar match on the amount requested, either through other funding sources, in-kind contributions or volunteer labor.

Trustees will lead a Community Fundraising Committee and manage the annual match effort. The community ten percent will combine with a minimum five percent payout from the endowment to form the annual grants budget. [\$12,500 (endowment interest) + \$25,000 (Grove Hall match) = \$37,500 (grant-making capacity)] The Trustees' first order of business is to develop the grant application process, criteria, evaluation standards and grantmaking schedule.

"Involvement in the Grove Hall Trust promotes community leadership development and provides tremendous learning opportunities for its Trustees," said Trustee Anthony Richards, director of the Elm Hill Family Service Center. "By uniting residents of Grove Hall around a common cause, together we can shape the future of our community."

THE IMPACT

"We designed the Grove Hall Trust with very specific outcomes in mind-- community investment impact and capacity building among funded nonprofits and individuals - including Trustees," said Dearing. "We know that small-scale community improvement initiatives can have extensive, positive ripple effects on community pride, social connections and community ownership."

Dearing explained that the impact happens at three levels: small community improvements and initiatives are completed because they are focused and manageable, local ownership of such initiatives increases, and accountability drives results when neighbors are accountable to neighbors.

According to Dearing, Trust grantees will see an impact on capacity building. Likely outcomes are that local nonprofits will master the grant-seeking and grant-making processes in preparation for larger asks to other institutions; participation in the Trust will build new community leadership; and grant evaluation results will create learning that stays in the community.

ABOUT BOSTON RISING

Boston Rising is a fund to end the cycle of poverty in Boston by clearing the way for the next Rising Class. The Rising Class is a new way of understanding people affected by poverty; it demands a new, people-centered approach to philanthropy. For too long, the conversation has focused on the weaknesses of individuals living in poverty, rather than focusing on their strengths and extraordinary potential for growth. People are not poor. People are rich - full of immense human potential. Because of that, breaking the cycle of poverty is completely doable. All we have to do is keep poverty from being inevitable, one family and one neighborhood at a time. For more information, visit www.BostonRising.org.

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