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The Year in Numbers
With the COVID-19 outbreak, the economic downturn, and acts of violence and racial injustice disproportionately impacting the communities Beyond Walls serves, we were challenged to step up as individuals and as an organization. In response, we intensified our efforts to galvanize our community around shared goals, strengthened existing partnerships, established and expanded relationships with nonprofit agencies, municipal leaders, and elected and appointed officials, and quickly pivoted to address the most pressing community needs. We went beyond the walls of our annual programming to react and support the community and the youth of Lynn in real-time.

As a result, we impacted our communities in ways that are real, measurable, and long-lasting by:

- Safeguarding the health of community members, reinforcing public health protocols, and mitigating the spread of the virus through our #LynnLoves and WaSH campaigns;
- Supporting the hard-hit restaurant industry by activating space through the installation of FoLD; and
- Using public art to amplify the voices of young people of color through Truth Be Told.

"Beyond Walls is inspiring other cities around Massachusetts and the nation that they, too, can use art as the foundation for building a local economy and community," said Richard Henderson, Chief Real Estate Officer of the MBTA. Beyond Walls embraces, celebrates, and promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in everything we do and our programs and projects reflect that.
In celebration of Black History Month, we invited Lynn youth to an art and music-filled event designed to highlight the achievements of local leaders of color. The Diaspora Gala provided an opportunity for young people to meet role models and prospective mentors, network with peers, and take part in a timely discussion with a diverse panel of successful, local professionals. "A lot of the time, when we talk about Black History Month, we talk about the struggles. We want to talk about the accomplishments." — Josie Santos, Director of Community Engagement, Beyond Walls

Panelists included:
- The Honorable Ina Howard Hogan, District Court Judge
- Stephen Archer, Chief, Lynn Fire Department
- Kiame Mahania, CEO, Lynn Community Health Center
- Magnolia Contreras, Director of Career Benefits, Dana Farber Cancer Institute

The event was meaningful for the more than 100 area teens who, like Lynn English High School Senior Nanima Guerrier, were in attendance: “I got to see people in positions of power that looked like me.”
As part of our COVID-19 response, the #LynnLoves campaign recognized individuals striving to serve and support their community during the pandemic. Beyond Walls donated 1,500 masks — produced by Lynn-based seamstresses who were paid for their time and talents — to essential workers, business owners, and Lynn youth. To thank these “hometown heroes” for their efforts, we highlighted individuals and local businesses on our social media platforms, which reach a combined following of more than 14,000.

**Artist Partners:** Angurria, Cey Adams, Cedric "Visel" Douglas and Julz Roth, Hiero Veiga and Remote, David Zayas
“LynnLoves helped economically as well as mentally. I lost my job during the pandemic, so the income really helped my family. It also helped me to feel productive.”

— Rocio, local Lynn seamstress
“As an essential employee, serving as the Manager of the Lynn Community Health Center’s COVID-19 Testing Team and Urgent Care, 2020 has proven to be an incredibly challenging year. This fall we were given a unique opportunity to partner with Beyond Walls. During some of our busiest and most trying periods, we were so fortunate to be surrounded by such positive energy. Art has such healing power and is meaningful to each of us in unique ways. Beyond Walls’ commitment to our community and their promotion of our social responsibility to protect those around us, that has been most impressive.”

— Rosie Conway, Operations Manager of COVID-19 Testing, Lynn Community Health Center
In the summer of 2020, Dasia Moore of The Boston Globe described Lynn as "the [Massachusetts] city held most tightly in the clutches of COVID-19." To address the toll the pandemic has had on the City of Lynn, Beyond Walls and Payette partnered to develop and produce free-standing, weather-resistant hand washing stations, “WaSH.” Created for high traffic areas, 30 hands-free WaSH units were installed at parks, social service organizations, construction sites and outdoor dining areas (seven of which were donated at no cost) in collaboration with local government and community partners. No electricity or plumbing is required, and the modular, laser cut sheet-metal components made it possible for local Lynn Vocational Technical Institute (LVTI) students to participate in every aspect of the assembly and installation as paid summer interns, learning real-world fabrication skills from professionals in the field. This program was also successfully launched in New Hampshire by request of the Mayor of Nashua: “The portable, public hand-washing stations are a resource Nashua is fortunate to have in our downtown, especially as the city responds to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Mayor Donchess, of Nashua, NH.
"We identified hand washing stations as a priority. Beyond Walls asked two questions: How many WaSH stations do you need and where should we put them? The response was immediate... and provided comfort to this vulnerable group. I remain grateful for the leadership, generosity and compassion demonstrated by Beyond Walls."

— Patrick Byrne
Director of Lynn, MA's COVID-19 Vulnerable Population Task Force
550 individual hand washes per day at Lynn Community Health Center
With the pandemic surging, and in keeping with our mission, Beyond Walls recognized the need for flexible outdoor spaces where people can safely gather, eat, drink, and enjoy all that their communities have to offer. In response, we once again partnered with Payette to develop FoLD, an attractive, easy to install barrier system that makes outdoor dining safe and accessible while protecting clientele from traffic.

Assembled at our Lynn headquarters by paid Lynn Vocational Technical Institute interns, our FoLD systems—which can include planters for additional privacy, as well as lighting, and trellises—helped restaurants safely reopen at a time when owners and chefs were desperately trying to attract customers, retain employees, test new models, and stabilize their businesses. Chef and owner of Nightshade Noodle Bar, Rachel Miller, said "Ambiance is a big part of how we operate here so it’s really nice to have something nice to look at, while also feeling safe in the street for outdoor dining..."
“2020 brought a formidable host of new challenges. How do we build community when we cannot gather? How might we use design to elevate the provision of necessary services and support public health and local businesses? The work of Beyond Walls has always been focused on communities with demonstrated need and the appetite for civic enhancement. This work is more important now than ever.”

— Parke MacDowell, AIA / Associate, Fabrication Manager, Payette
"Nashua has benefited greatly from the Beyond Walls WaSH and FoLD program. The metal barriers made to enclose outdoor dining areas are sleek, stylish, and truly enhance the outside eating experience on E. Pearl Street. The community partnership is special to the City of Nashua and one we look forward to continuing for years to come."

— Mayor Jim Donchess,
Nashua, NH
When it became clear that a street art festival was no longer a viable option, we asked young people to share their perspectives on a reimagined project. Beyond Walls and our partners invited local Lynn youth to submit art and stories that conveyed their personal experiences in 2020, which in turn inspired the creation of new installations. 200+ children, teens, and young adults, ranging in age from 5 to 21 years, contributed their voices, stories, and artwork to Truth Be Told. Nine Lynn teens interned or volunteered on the installations, and 127 contributed portraits for the "Inside Out Project," an offshoot of Truth Be Told.

Following all public health protocols, we safely brought four artists and two executive producers to Lynn in the fall of 2020 to create and install new public artworks in downtown Lynn.

Community conversations on race, equity, and the role of art and artists in society were hosted in-person with students at St. Mary’s school and via Instagram Live. We organized a number of virtual workshops (reaching more than sixty participants) that encouraged an exchange of ideas and an open dialogue about the far-reaching implications of racial injustice. To help spur further conversation we invited police officers, local artists and activists, and our student interns to paint the flags featured in artist Sheila Pree Bright’s mural. During this program we guided a discussion about patriotism and what the American flag symbolizes.

**Project Partners:**

HARBOR VOICES
PUBLIC ART

**In Kind Partners:**

Cliff Notez
“The Beyond Walls programming with artists was such an amazing day for everyone, and really was exactly what everyone needed with remote learning and COVID fatigue hitting both kids and staff. Lynn is so lucky to have you, and the Y is lucky beyond measure to have Beyond Walls as a partner.”

—Andrea Baez, Senior Branch Executive, Lynn YMCA
My fear is amplified. It feels like I’ve lost all innocence.
The world is cruel. Being black feels wicked. Being black tastes sweet.
I used to pick up seashells.
Now that I know I’m black, I pick up swords for battle.
My little hands that used to hungrily scoop for ice-cream, now angrily scoop
bloodied black bodies off the floor.
My tears always cloud the good. I dream of the good.
In my dream, there is a happy black girl on the other side of this rusty mirror.
She’s clad in peace. Such a beautiful outfit. It’s calm.
She’s not dressed for battle. Her smile isn’t sewn onto her face.
She has no shame. She feels wholesome. Her essence is loved. She’s visible.
People marvel at her colour and think it births a rainbow.
She’s screaming at me to fight. She knows her life matters. A part of me wants
to kill her. Her name is hope and it feels disgusting. A bigger part of me wants
to join her. And dance with her in a circle of joy.
So I’ll rebel And I’ll fight Until my black no longer feels wicked.

Submitted by a young adult at the Haven Project
Inside Out Project at Lynn Community Health Center
2020 IN NUMBERS

127
Portraits of Lynn Youth on the Lynn Community Health Center Headquarters

1,500+
Masks distributed to front line workers and local teen volunteers

“WaSH” hand washing stations assembled by paid Lynn Vocational Technical Institute High School Interns

123
Lynn youth involved through internships, events, and volunteer opportunities

71
Gallons of paint donated

“Amplifier” Posters promoting unity, togetherness and best health practices featured on local storefronts

140
"Beyond Walls hasn't created that sense of local pride in Lynn, it was always there... They've just helped to showcase it to the world, local residents, and former Lynn residents alike."

—Jonathan Berk, Director at Patronicity
THANK YOU

None of our 2020 projects would have been realized without the support of our partners. We are forever grateful for all of the amazing organizations and individuals who came forward to advance our work and enrich the communities we serve.

We appreciate every dollar donated, every minute of volunteer time contributed, and every partnership forged.

Thank you!
Support our efforts!

For more testimonials from our community partners, head to:

To check out our 2020 media coverage: