March 14, 2019 CONTACT:

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**Bobby Mendes Peace Legacy Holds**

**20th Anniversary Awards Dinner on April 27**

***Founder Isaura Mendes to Present Seven***

***“Matthew Courage Award” Scholarships to Local Youth***

***John Barros, Boston’s Chief of Economic Development,***

***Provides Keynote Address; State Rep. Liz Miranda Emcees***

More than 150 community supporters, peace activists, business leaders and public officials will gather to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Bobby Mendes Peace Legacy on Saturday, April 27 from 6:30 – 11 pm at First Parish Dorchester, 10 Parish Street, Dorchester, MA. BMPL founder Isaura Mendes will join Keynote Speaker John Barros, Chief of Economic Development, City of Boston, and State Representative Liz Miranda to present scholarships to seven young people from Boston’s neighborhoods.

The scholarships are inspired by the Seven Principles of Peace that guide Isaura’s mission to prevent violence and aid survivors: Unity, Justice, Forgiveness, Courage, Hope, Faith and Love.

“I want to encourage children and young people to pursue education and build good lives,” Mendes said. “It is 20 years since I established the Bobby Mendes Peace Legacy with the message: Stop the Violence, Reach for Peace, and Learn to Forgive. I hope that this anniversary celebration and the seven scholarships will carry that mission forward. We need to stop the violence. We need to get the guns off the streets. We need to give hope and encouragement to children and families in our neighborhoods.”

The Bobby Mendes Peace Legacy is an ongoing tribute to Bobby Mendes and his younger brother Matthew, both of whom were murdered near their home in Dorchester. Isaura Mendes strives to help survivors of violence, to encourage children and young people to pursue education and build good lives, and to bring peace and non-violence to her community. Matthew was the victim of gun violence, and his mother advocates tirelessly for gun control and to get guns off the streets.

Through the Bobby Mendes Peace Legacy, she and supporters provide several programs, including “Christmas with Bobby” – an annual celebration for more than 100 neighborhood children and family members with gifts from Santa, a Cape Verdean luncheon, music and fun; Back to School Barbecue giving a boost to school-age youth as she distributes back-packs and school supplies and encourages them to do well; “Success Buttons” to celebrate graduations and school achievement of neighborhood children and youth; Survivor Support and Grief Counseling, providing empathy and understanding to families and loved ones of those lost to violence.

Over the years, Mendes has regularly visited prisons in Concord, Norfolk, Bridgewater and South Bay, speaking to groups of inmates, telling her story and hearing theirs, describing the Seven Principles of Peace as not just words, but a way to live. She has received numerous awards including an Honorary Doctorate in Social Sciences from Boston College and the Testament of Hope Award from Martin Luther King III.

She is excited about the seven scholarships to be awarded at this year’s Annual Awards Dinner and asks all those who care about children to purchase sponsorships and/or tickets to the dinner and thereby support the seven scholarships. “We want each scholarship to truly make a difference in the child’s life,” she said. “Not only will it put a dent in college or vocational program costs, but it shows them we care.”

BMPL asks your support of the 20th Anniversary Bobby Mendes Peace Legacy Matthew Courage Awards Dinner, which will enhance and expand the inspirational work of the BMPL and the young people and families who benefit from its presence in their lives.

Go to [www.bmpl.org/sponsorships](http://www.bmpl.org/sponsorships) for tax-deductible sponsorship opportunities or to buy advertising space in the event program book. To purchase tickets, go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-bobby-mendes-peace-legacy-20th-anniversary-matthew-courage-awards-dinner-tickets-56700681264>

Bobby Mendes Peace Legacy is a unique program of Touchable Stories, a non-profit organization dedicated to building community through art and dialogue.

Thank you for your support!

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