

2014 Annual Letter

Dear Friends and Family of WeCanRow-Boston, We had another successful season on the water, with an enthusiastic and skilled group of newbies, beautiful weather and great times together. With the growth of our organization we took time to reassess the mission of WeCanRow-Boston and conducted a survey, which we used to better align the program with the needs of our current membership. We reconfirmed our mission as a wellness organization, with wellness being both physical and emotional. We are committed to making all members feel welcome and included from the moment they walk through the doors of the DeWolfe Boathouse.

As a result of the survey and to meet the needs of our expanded membership we now have two additional coaches for all of us on Tuesday evenings throughout the year. Ellie Wierzbowski, who rowed at Trinity College and coached previously at G-Row, joined us in the spring. Kate Yeksigian joined us in the fall when she started graduate school at Boston University, and previously coached the WeCanRow in Madison, Wisconsin. The WeCanRow network is truly a wide one!



Membership

This year brought in our largest class of new members, a grand total of 16 newbies! Many joined us during our "Meet the Tanks" session in February, and even more braved the iffy weather in May for our Saturday "Learn to Row" at the DeWolfe Boathouse. What's more, this newbie group embraced the sport and our team wholeheartedly. Several newbies participated in CRI's annual Celebration of Women in Rowing, have led our weekly stretching warmup/cool downs, and one newbie is joining the Board for 2015. Now that's a commitment!

Additional Rowing

Empowered by their experience with WeCanRow-Boston, some of our members connected with the wider rowing community in greater Boston and participated through

these organizations and races:

- Community Rowing's Celebration of Women in Rowing
- Masters Programs at Greater Lawrence Community Boating and Community Rowing
 - Craftsbury Sculling Center
- Avalon Rowing Club's Weekend Clinic/Harbor Row
- Northeast Masters Nationals, Head of the Textile, and Head of the Charles Regattas

Congratulations to those rowers who stepped out of their comfort zones to row with non-WCR-B'ers, learn to scull or head race for the first time!

Community Involvement

We continue to enjoy a generous relationship with Charles River Apparel, whose donation of custom WeCanRow-Boston team shirts helps us express our team spirit. Thank you Charles River! For the first time this year, WeCanRow participated in Dana Farber's Activity & Adventure Expo which aims to bring programs like ours to the attention of cancer patients. Our participation in this event brought many dedicated newbies to the boathouse.

An annual tradition, WeCanRow-Boston hosted a booth at the Acton Library Holiday Fair. We participated again this December and were deliciously represented by crafty and foodie WCR-B'ers who provided homemade confections, knitting, and other hand crafted

items. WCR-B members volunteered at the Pan Mass Challenge as well as the Head of the Charles Regatta. This fall we also held our special tradition of bringing together BU's Women's Rowing team and WeCanRow-Boston members at the Scarlet and Blue row.

Fundraising



Score for a Cure: We are indebted to the generosity of the Score for a Cure organization for continuing to keep WeCanRow-Boston as a recipient of funds from their charity soccer tournament. Many thanks to SFAC which donated **\$6,000** to us this year!

Tufts 10k Walkers and Runners: Three members walked and ran to raise a total of \$2,026 for their efforts at the Tufts 10k Road Race! Thank you so much for putting your sweat equity into raising funds for our program. And thank you to all members who donated and

prodded your friends and family to do the same.

As most of you know, membership fees do not cover all of our ongoing costs, so we are dependent on outside funds to keep paddling. We are grateful for all these funds which help us provide six months of membership at no cost to new members, as well as a sliding fee scale for members who have financial limitations.



Thank You

No year would be complete without acknowledging all the people who contribute their time to making WeCanRow-Boston a safe, healthy and enjoyable wellness program. We are fortunate to have the support of wonderful coaches, Alice Taggart, Molly Jordan, Ellie Wierzbowski, and our newest recruit Kate Yeksigian. We could not get out each week without our coxswains Katie Durand, Marlene O'Hara, and Hannah Rooney. We are honored to have the ongoing support of physical therapist and national breast cancer advocate extraordinaire,

Nancy Roberge, PT, DPT, M.ED. We would not have boats to row or a place to launch them without the generosity of Boston University's Women's Rowing Team, DeWolfe Boathouse, and the incomparable Head Coach Stacey Rippetoe and her coaching team. Thank you for making BU such a welcoming home for WCR-B.

Last but certainly not least, we could not have navigated the sometimes choppy waters of 2014 without the positive energy, never-ending smile, and heart of outgoing team president Maggie Bodkin. With the trust and affection of the team, Maggie focused on the importance of WCR as a group and kept us working together towards common goals.

One final note: This year our team has seen more than its fair share of recurrences, new diagnoses, and other illnesses affecting our community. More than ever, our members have leaned on each other and pulled together not only on the water but off the water as well. We thank all of you in our wider community for supporting our program and its transformative power.

Sincerely and in Good Health for 2015,

The Members of WeCanRow-Boston

WeCanRow-Boston, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Please visit us on Facebook or our Website to donate via Paypal

www.wecanrowboston.org

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