

January-March, 2023

# ACEDONE's Quarterly Newsletter

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## Hello ACEDONE subscribers!

We are so happy to be moving into the new year having accomplished so much, and to have so much to look forward to in 2023. Since the start of the year, we have been quite active within spaces of community, politics, education, and much more. Continue reading below to see all that ACEDONE has been up to!

### Celebrate the Board

This year, we are happy to announce that we've elected **Saciid Ercole** as our newest chairperson! He has served as a dedicated member of the board for 4 years, and has taken the lead in fundraising efforts in the community. Welcome, Saciid! In order to celebrate this, and the work of our two former chairs, **Anis Hashi** and **Ahmed Nasir**, we held an event on March 10th with many of our current and former board members. Thank you to everyone who showed up, and thank you Anis and Ahmed for your many years of service and dedication to ACEDONE! You will be dearly missed, and your work will have long lasting impacts on our organization.



Pictured from left to right are Anis Abdulle holding his Leadership Excellence Award, CEO Abdulkadir Y. Hussein, Ahmed Noor holding his Innovation in Education Award, a community member, and Chairperson Saciid Ercole

### Health Equity:

Our Health Equity Team has been working hard to make sure that with the end of federal COVID19 protections, immigrant communities are still able to stay healthy and safe. We've had 3 vaccine clinics so far this year, offering free Covid and Flu vaccines. We've also been releasing weekly media campaigns informing people about the importance of protecting our communities, as the impacts of COVID19 are everlasting. In partnership with HCFA, ACEDONE held a focus group with older adults in the immigrant community to better understand the issues with and barriers to accessing health care and coverage. All the participants received \$70 gift cards to target! We also wanted to inform ACEDONE's followers that MassHealth is redetermining whether people are still eligible for coverage. Please look out for a blue envelope in the coming weeks to reconfirm your coverage. Follow this link to the [MassHealth Eligibility Redetermination Outreach Toolkit](#).

### Small Business:

ACEDONE's Small Business Development Department, we have made a lot of progress since the beginning of this year. Most notably, in February, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley visited the ACEDONE to deliver \$640,003 in federal community project funding to set the groundwork for an equitable and just economic recovery from the pandemic! The funding received will go towards supporting the economic vitality of small businesses in predominantly low income, Black, brown and immigrant communities across the Massachusetts 7th Congressional District. We are so lucky and honored to have received this grant. Thank you very much, Congresswoman!

We also hired a Small Business Development Coordinator in January, allowing us to increase the capacity of our team to serve more people in the community. Since the launch of our Micro-loan program in October 2022, we have already provided 8 loan applications to small business owners in the total amount of \$140K so far, and are planning to finalize 5 more within the next three months (Q2). Our financial literacy workshops for small businesses are continuing!

We have a scheduled 4 curricula financial literacy workshop for small business owners that will take place on April 26th -27th in partnership with Cambridge Savings Bank. We are also working on becoming a CDFI (Community Development Financial Institution) to advance its financial capability soon.



ACEDONE staff and Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley at the NonProfit Center, posing in front of the ACEDONE logo and backdrop for a photo with the \$643,003 check.

### Pre-teen Programs:

Our after-school pre-teen cohort has been busy at work with school, and with having a great time throughout the winter season! This school year, we've had 40 students 1st-8th grade. We've been focusing on their social emotional development, and have found it powerful to create space for the youth to express how they feel through art. We also had a very engaging Q&A session with students from Boston College and our students from grades 6-8. As you can see pictured above, we also had an amazing time taking the youth snow tubing at Ski Ward in Shrewsbury over winter break. Students also received gift cards to use at their own discretion throughout the break. As the end of the school year grows closer, we have begun to prepare for our showcase talent show on May 5th. While the after school program begins to wrap up, our summer applications for 2023 just opened! [Use this link to register](#). We will be working on creating an antiracist learning environment, social emotional learning, launching parent engagement plans, expanding partnerships with schools and other orgs, equitable literacy, and much more. Moreover, we are seeking passionate and community-oriented individuals to join our team at the Summer Learning Academy. View job descriptions [HERE!](#) Check out our [website](#) for more information on our programs.



Kids from ACEDONE's youth programming posing at the top of a snowy hill with snow tubes.

### Youth Development Programs:

In the 2023 school year program, there are a total of 31 youth, 6 of which are seniors that are all projected to graduate in 2023! They have been working hard on a number of projects throughout the year so far. Their current main focus is bringing attention to the issue of mass incarceration in America. They are working on a showcase that fundraises money for an organization working to end mass incarceration.

On February 25 some of the youth received the chance to attend the largest Black Fraternity and Sorority Step show, the New England StepFest at Northeastern University where they experienced first hand the history of Black Fraternities and Sororities. Illuminating that night was the positive impact, sense of community you gain from joining, and the abundance of success in the Black community. Additionally, our youth were given the opportunity to participate in the 1st Black Policy Youth Conference organized by Harvard University Black Students of Harvard Kennedy School on April 2nd. The theme for this year's conference was "A Modern Day Greenbook: Navigating the 21st Century with an Abundance Mindset". This gave our youth the opportunity to participate in an open exchange of ideas affecting Black youth.

Currently, with the end of the school year growing closer, the teen students are preparing for a live performance of activism through poetry, fashion, and art happening in early May centered around social justice issues. The youth graduating from high school are gearing up for the end of the year Grad Night celebration also happening in early May. Not only have these youth been working hard to be effective and active citizens and expressing themselves through art, but they have also been improving their academics significantly! Our data shows that 60% of our youth have improved their academic performance this year. Great job to all of these hardworking youth! ACEDONE is also in the process of launching an internship component and career exploration for our summer youth employment program. Our goal this school year was to increase the exposure to different post secondary success and deep dive into issues that affect our community with youth voices at the center. Our summer program is hiring youth organizers and youth employees. If you are interested [click on this link](#).

**Donate!**

