

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

We asked, readers answered. Here are some exceptional women making a difference in the Greater Boston area.

By [Jenna Reyes](#) Globe Staff, Updated March 22, 2024, 11:31 a.m.



ADOBE, GLOBE STAFF

In hopes of recognizing extraordinary women in the Greater Boston area this Women's History Month, [we asked our readers](#) to nominate someone who they believe is making a difference in the lives of others.

We received dozens of messages of appreciation from family members, friends, partners, and colleagues of women working in a variety of fields.

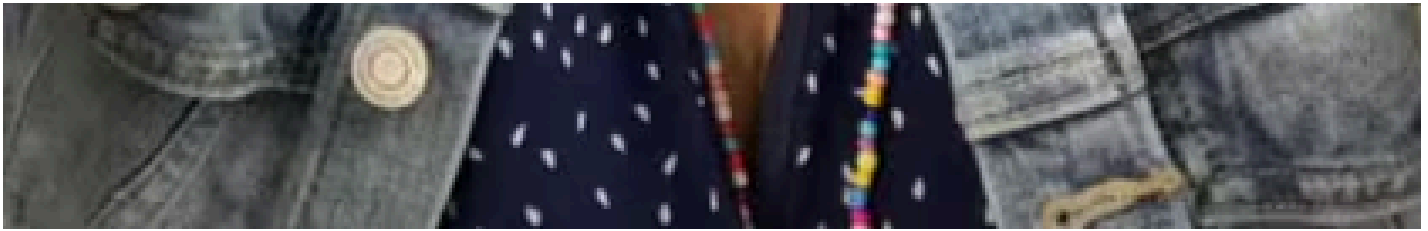
We weren't able to fit all of them in one article, so here are just a few responses that we want to highlight:



A photo of Eva Osagiede, provided by a coworker. HANDOUT

“Eva Osagiede is the Director of Operations at Walnut Street Center, Inc. in Medford, Mass. She is the glue that holds our operations together. Eva works tirelessly to ensure that each of the adults with intellectual disabilities that we support gets the best that we have to offer. She supports managers and direct support staff by meeting them where they are and making them better employees. She also serves as an integral part of our Senior Team ensuring that the agency is in good health. Eva is the hardest working person I know. There is no job too big or too small: she will clean a room, drive someone to an appointment, teach a class, or work with a new employee that has forgotten their password (again). The agency and the disabilities community is lucky to have her.” -**Nominated by a coworker,Carolyn Guffey from Woburn**





A photo of Jackie Moquin-Vaudo, provided by her daughter. HANDOUT

“Jackie Moquin-Vaudo is an extraordinary woman in the Boston area. She has dedicated her life to social justice as an elementary school teacher for over 35 years and takes instrumental steps each day in making her classroom and school district more inclusive. People remember her for her kindness, compassion and selflessness in prioritizing the empowerment of her students and making sure they are heard and respected. She spends countless hours outside school attending her student’s sports events and plays, buying food for them, and even attended a former student’s wedding. Outside of the classroom, Jackie is a loving mother of three and grandmother of two. She raised her children and grandchildren to speak their minds and to stand up for what they believe in, and has always preached that kindness comes first.” -**Nominated by her daughter, Anne Marie Vaudo from Arlington**

“Hannah Tanabe. Hannah, in her capacity as a senior attorney in the Employment Law Unit at Greater Boston Legal Services, protects the rights of the most vulnerable workers — those most likely to be taken advantage of, and least likely to successfully navigate the complex administrative and legal avenues necessary to enforce their rights and protections. During the height of the COVID pandemic, Hannah shouldered the burden of spearheading GBLS’s response to the tidal wave of unemployment insurance cases, and in the process, she became an expert in the field, which has led to wider scale advocacy around systemic changes to make the unemployment insurance system more accessible and responsive to real-world challenges. In addition to her large portfolio of individual representation cases and systemic advocacy projects, Hannah has also served as a mentor and supervisor, both formally and informally, for multiple younger attorneys, sharing her insights, values, and expertise to ensure that this next generation of attorneys is best situated to provide the advocacy necessary to

respond to the next iteration of challenges for clients. Most importantly, beyond her work as an advocate, Hannah is an incredible mother to an energetic toddler, and a caring and attentive friend. She anticipates the needs of others, and offers help and support before anyone even realizes they need it. Originally from Hawaii, Hannah came to Boston in 2012, laid down strong roots, and has enmeshed herself in the city that has become her home.” **-Nominated by her husband, Adam Logan from Malden**



A photo of Allycia Solomon-White, provided by her mother. HANDOUT

“The extraordinary woman I’d like to nominate is Allycia Solomon-White. She works for Pine Street Inn as a Senior Housing Placement Specialist, dedicating herself to the often overlooked task of helping house unhoused individuals from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities in our city. What makes her special is her unwavering dedication to this cause for nearly five years, showing exceptional commitment and compassion. Despite the challenges, she has continued to excel, especially during the pandemic, reporting to work in person and tirelessly meeting the needs of underserved communities. Allycia’s commitment to serving others, especially in times of crisis, truly sets her apart and makes her deserving of recognition. She has gone above and beyond her station, even helping some patrons work on getting proper documentation so that they could have better housing and career opportunities.” -**Nominated by her mother, Tracey Solomon-White from Boston**

“Erica Depina is an amazing swim Instructor at the YMCA in Roxbury. She teaches both adults and kids classes. She works her magic with people of all ages, helping beginners overcome their fears with humor and kindness, encouraging intermediate learners to push themselves. Erica is bilingual and helps Spanish-speaking families feel welcome and relaxed.” -**Nominated by a woman who took adult swim classes, Jenny Jacobs from Jamaica Plain**

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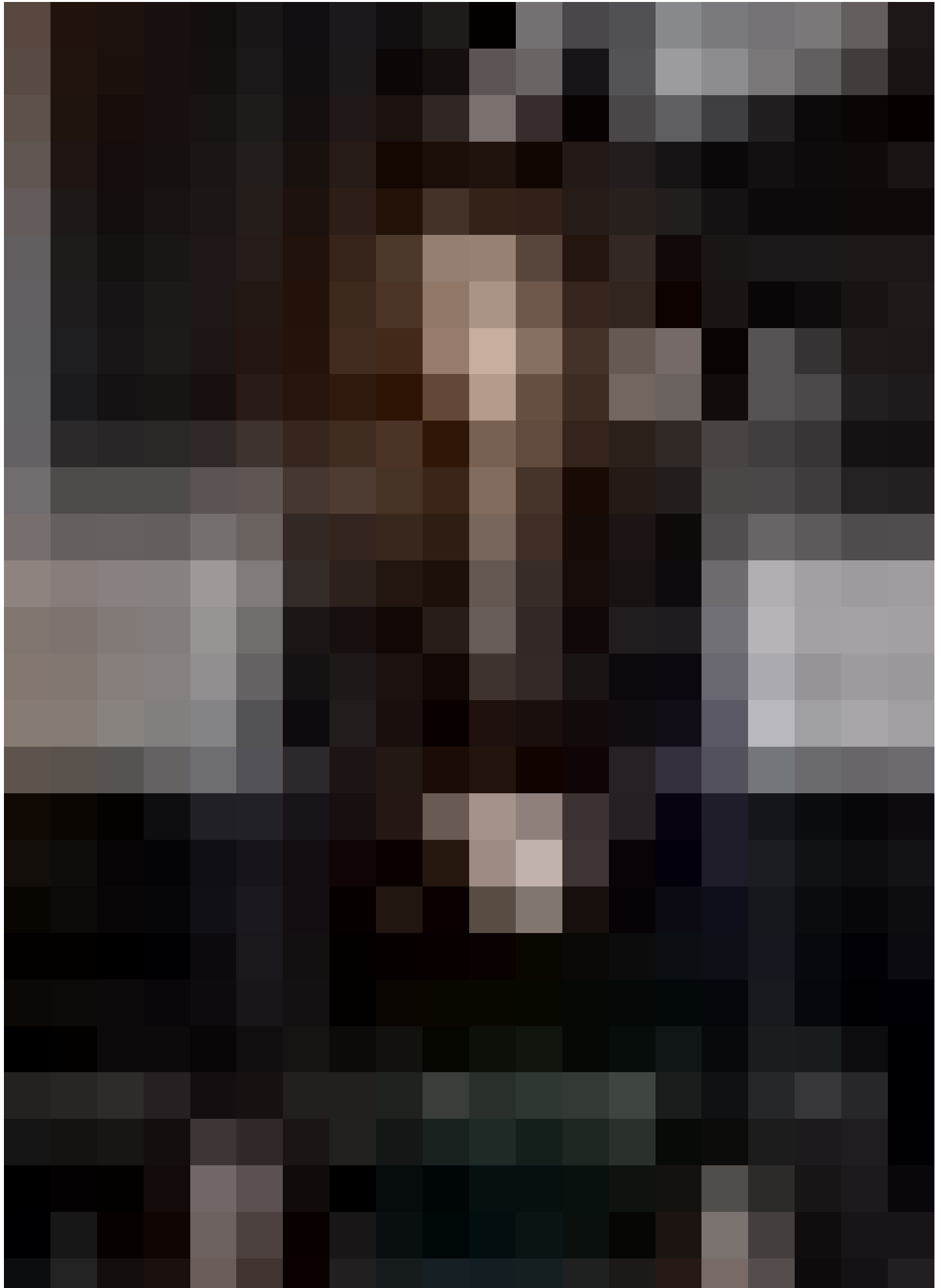
A photo of Felicia Sullivan, provided by her partner. HANDOUT

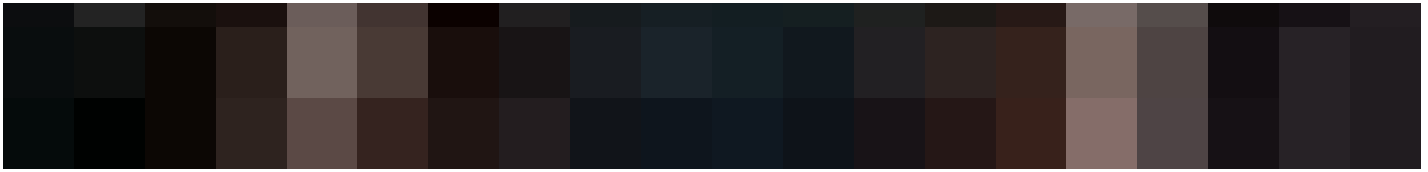
“Felicia Sullivan is a mom to two children and so much more. She lives in Watertown and is a member of the board of the Watertown Community Foundation, an

organization with a mission to build and sustain a vibrant, diverse community. She also leads an annual Unity Breakfast with several community members on MLK day each year. She is also a successful corporate lawyer having graduated from Suffolk and served in public roles for years before entering the private sector. Felicia is BIPOC and is involved in countless ways to support her community, especially those less fortunate.”

-Nominated by her partner, Brendan Kiburz from Boston

“Jaclyn Coble is a local mother of two, a devoted veterinarian, and a small business owner who serves our Boston-area community in a way no one else has — truly. As a new mom working at a corporate ER vet practice at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, Jaci was balancing the duties of motherhood with 14-16 hour shifts to ensure no pet in need went without care, including those turned away by other overwhelmed clinics. Then she met Mr. Magoo, a 9-year-old Boxer with a very painful and, tragically, inoperable nasal tumor that often bled. All she could do for him was treat his pain with medication twice a week to keep him comfortable. This heartbreaking experience left her wondering about other pets needing pain management, proactive therapy, and palliative care (services that aren’t offered by most animal hospitals or practices, especially in the Boston area, where there’s a critical, ongoing vet shortage). So she decided to change that. She founded Sea Legs Integrative Veterinary Health, a specialty clinic offering rehabilitation, physical therapy, pain management, palliative care, and modular alternative therapies. Despite the considerable personal risk of starting her own business from scratch during a time of economic upheaval, it was something Jaci knew she had to do; she even earned specialty certifications and took out big bank loans to make it happen — and is still working to turn a profit ... In short, Jaci continues to be a selfless advocate for an oft-overlooked demographic of Bostonians without a voice: our furry friends who suffer from pain and aches like any one of us, and now, finally, can seek some relief.” **-Nominated by Julianne Goldfinger from Holbrook**





A photo of Leah Barrault, provided by her colleague. HANDOUT

“Leah Barrault opened her own law firm focusing on representing public safety Unions (over 100, including Boston Firefighters Local 718) across New England [and has] used that foundation to raise up other female-driven projects in the community. All that and a hockey hype-mom 7 days a week.” -**Nominated by a colleague, Hailey Ferguson from Dorchester**

“Danna Remen is the Director of Development for the Ellie Fund. The Ellie Fund provides essential support services for breast cancer patients to ease the stresses of everyday life, allowing the focus to be on family, recovery and healing. Danna is an extraordinary person who is deeply committed not only to helping those with cancer but to health equity and ensuring equal access to early prevention and treatment of breast cancer for all. A natural connector with boundless energy and warmth, Danna makes people feel special, cared for, and important. She is a gem!” -**Nominated by a friend and colleague, Susan Ross from Brookline**



A photo of Pauline Lally, provided by a Damien's Pantry board member. HANDOUT

“Pauline Lally is the current Executive Director of Damien’s Place Food Pantry in Wareham. While running a construction business started by her father, Pauline began serving on the board of Damien’s, including as treasurer. When the Executive Director left and there was no one else to take over, Pauline took the job for nominal pay. She led the organization through the worst of Covid, finding safe ways to meet a constantly growing need. Under her leadership, Damien’s recently raised \$2 million and moved operations from a cramped warehouse to a much larger newly built facility to provide nourishing food for thousands of food-insecure South Coast residents. She works tirelessly and humbly to meet this important need, writing grants and leading in her quiet way. I can think of no one making a bigger difference in this part of the state.” -
Nominated by a Damien’s board member, Norma Scogin from Wareham

“Marydith E Tuitt. She is a US Navy Veteran, a leader, a mom, a grandmother, a huge advocate for women and girls and a Commissioner on the MA Commission on the Status of Women among MANY other hats in the city of Boston. She has committed her life to making the world a better and safer place for women and girls. She represents women through her lived experiences and relationships she’s built with community members throughout her lifetime in Boston.” -
Nominated by Shaitia Spruell from Lancaster



A photo of Danielle Ferrer, courtesy of Heading Home. HANDOUT

“Danielle Ferrier is the executive director of Heading Home, a non-profit that provides temporary shelter (including to migrant families), wrap around services, and ultimately, permanent housing to our unhoused population. She is a trauma informed social worker and true clinician and while she hates the spotlight, the work she is doing is incredibly important. She’s incredibly unassuming but wow does she get the job done. I would follow her into battle any time.” -Nominated by Erin Rafferty from Medford

“Caregiving is much more than helping a loved one with medications, and doctor’s visits. It is about giving 24 hours, 7 days a week care to your loved one. My wife Joyce Passerini has been the primary caregiver to our daughter for the last six years. She has been the family strength and pillar during this nightmare that no family should have to endure. Our daughter has epilepsy and suffered a seizure in 2018, which left her with an anoxic brain ... The days became a symphony of routines — medication schedules, doctor’s appointments, therapy sessions. Each step forward, however small, became a

cause for celebration. Joyce learned to celebrate the victories with a smile, the flicker of recognition in our daughter's eyes, the stumbling steps that led to independent strides... The journey continues, with its ups and downs. Some days feel like victories, others like relentless battles. But through it all, the bond between my wife and daughter remains unbroken. It is not just a mother and daughter; they are warriors, battling together, side-by-side. And in this fight, she finds an unexpected strength, a purpose fueled by love and fueled by hope. For as long as there is hope, there is a reason to fight, to believe, and to love with every fiber of my being." **-Nominated by her partner, Pat**

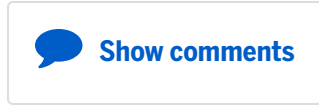


A photo of Connie Askin, provided by her husband. HANDOUT

“Connie Askin, CEO of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Central MA. Besides being my wife, Connie has always been mission driven, making this world a better place to live ... Connie graduated Harvard Extension School and put herself through the Babson MBA program. From a modest upbringing she has made us all richer by the work she does. At BBBS/CM she took a challenged organization and turned it around to a growing, vibrant organization serving communities with much needed mentor support for ‘littles.’” -Nominated by her husband, Donny Askin from Wayland

Want to tell us about an extraordinary woman in your life? You can do so, [here](#).

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