LEO Inc.’s mission is to strengthen the Greater Lynn community through resources and services that provide opportunities for children, families and individuals to thrive.

**Board of Directors, 2018 – 19**

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Thelma Velasquez

As a Community Action Agency, LEO is governed by a tripartite board, representing in equal parts members from the private sector, elected public officials or their appointed representatives, and members of the low-income community in our service area.
Dear Friends,

Lynn is a tapestry, a thick textile with threads from scores of countries and cultures. LEO is alive with this same diversity. Our children, families, and staff represent 15 countries and speak 10 different languages. We embrace this array of languages and cultural traditions in a respectful, nurturing environment.

LEO focuses on community building through engagement. Lynn’s immigrant population is an asset to our agency and to Greater Lynn. Whether it is volunteering in our classrooms, canvassing for our Community Assessment Survey, spreading the word on workshops, seminars, or job opportunities, our immigrant community is a vital part of our success. While the country is engaged in dialogue about exclusion, we focus our sights on inclusion by building bridges to better employment, healthier families, and financial stability.

I proudly share this page with my friend, former LEO Head Start parent, current board member, and ultimate community advocate, Thelma Velasquez. Thelma embodies the power of our immigrant community. We recognized her merit and are thrilled the New England Patriots organization did, too.

We are honored to serve as the community action agency that warms you, works with you to educate your children, provides you nourishment, and connects you with opportunities to thrive.

BIRGITTA S. DAMON
Chief Executive Officer

JAMES J. CARRIGAN
President, Board of Directors

An Unforgettable Highlight

Former Head Start parent, tireless volunteer and LEO advocate of over 15 years, Thelma Velasquez was chosen as one of only 25 recipients for the Myra Kraft Community MVP Award, the Patriots Foundation’s highest award for community volunteerism. In addition to the luncheon at Gillette Stadium, a personalized football and the tremendous presentation ceremony, LEO was awarded $10,000 in Thelma’s name! Thank you Thelma, a role model for community action. Thank you New England Patriots Foundation and the Robert & Myra Kraft Family Foundation, it was an honor and a privilege.
SSU and the ASQ: We welcomed a group of Salem State University graduate students to LEO for a two-day training to learn to work with our parents and children in the ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) process. The ASQ supports Head Start’s goals: enhancing the social and cognitive development of children and engaging parents in their children’s learning. ASQ evaluates communication, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, problem solving, and personal-social skills. The results help us deliver individualized services that strengthen families and improve school readiness. We could not manage as many interested families as we received without this talented group.

Paving the way to Census 2020: With Lynn showing some of the lowest census turn-out data in all of Massachusetts, we are dedicating significant outreach time to educating our area on the importance of being counted. We attended the National Grid Energy Expo, sharing literature detailing the reasons why the census matters. We got tables at two Lynn Public School open houses in the hardest to count Highlands area and spoke with more than 375 parents, in both English and Spanish. We are utilizing our own internal and external communications to educate on the power of strong data. We share employment opportunities to work as data collectors in our area. Our ESOL parents are learning about what the census can do for them while in class. Each client that visits us for LIHEAP benefits leaves with census information. A grant from the Massachusetts Census Equity Fund supports our efforts.

VITA is VITAL: VITA is free tax preparation and filing for households that make $54,000 or less per year. With limited staff and resources the IRS set a goal for LEO to serve 50 households. We nearly doubled the projected goal, serving 99 households. This program clearly answers a call for our community. In checking in with our clients after tax season, 34 households reported more income in their pockets as a result of using VITA. Special thanks to Community Credit Union, Metro Credit Union, St. Jean’s Credit Union, and Citrin Cooperman & Co. for their support.
LEO welcomed 548 children to Head Start and Early Head Start this program year, an increase of 13.4 percent. Within those numbers were more children dealing with trauma — factors as varied as homelessness, forced separation, substance use disorder, and domestic violence. **Head Start philosophy has long acknowledged that childhood trauma affects every aspect of learning**, and LEO’s curriculum has taken a strong turn towards trauma-responsive care for more stable classrooms and sensitive case management.

For years, LEO relied on outside clinical support to address the social-emotional and mental health diagnoses of our children. To make a genuine difference, LEO invested in hiring a Social-Emotional Behavior Manager. Tanya McLean, MSW, LICSW, has an exceptionally strong background in trauma intervention practices, family-centered models and clinical supervision. **Tanya’s full-time, year-round position has tripled the clinical contact hours for our children and families.**

LEO has been accepted as a pilot member in The Pyramid Model Consortium’s community of practice, which offers intensive training for our early childhood educators, supported by strategic mentoring and coaching beyond the formal workshops. An Impact Area Grant from Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation will provide initial funding for this resource-intensive approach, and the agency is aggressively pursuing additional avenues of private investment to sustain our commitment.

Our children continue to show impressive growth in the early childhood domains that indicate school readiness. And as the Lynn Public Schools commits to Spanish language and literacy as a measure of academic success, LEO too is assessing and tracking those gains.

### Comparative School Readiness Scores
**Head Start Programs: Blossom, Broad & JRCCC**

<table>
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<th>Spring 2019</th>
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<tr>
<td>Social Emotional</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
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<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>63%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Language</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish Literacy</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kelly had a seizure in the classroom.

Educators Ruth Diaz, Cindy Morales, Sharon Crowell and Reama Jouni were calmly and successfully able to put their training to work to ensure Kelly was safe and stable in our care. A moment they will not soon forget.

Kelly had long suffered from Febrile Seizures, as our team would later learn at the hospital. Febrile Seizures, also known as a fever fit, is a seizure associated with a high body temperature. Kelly’s mom, Sury Pascual Guzman, was extremely frightened and noted Kelly had experienced these seizures outside of Early Head Start (EHS) but she did not know how to respond to her daughter; a helpless and dangerous position.

Our staff nurse, Nicaury Suazo-Ortiz, went on home visits while Kelly was out of school. She educated Sury on the warning signs of an impending seizure, how to manage a seizure in progress, as well as how to prevent future seizures.

Our staff assisted Sury by scheduling healthcare appointments; primary doctor and neurologist visits. Kelly was placed on an individual health plan so all involved with her care would be prepared with a solid understanding of her medications and best practices to keep her healthy and safe.

Today, Kelly is a lively participant in the classroom and has been seizure free since spring! Kelly Pascual is a joyful addition to EHS and a source of pride for our community of parents and educators.
I was a Head Start baby.
I grew up in the projects of Revere with my mom and 3 siblings.
I was the first of my family to graduate high school.

I became a devoted Head Start teacher while working toward my associate degree in Early Childhood Education, but was laid off due to a cut in federal funding. In 2014, I applied for a Lead Teacher position at LEO; I had been a Lead Teacher previously and also had prior director’s experience.

LEO took a chance on me. Knowing I was so close to graduating with my credentials, they offered me the Lead Teacher position. After two years in the classroom, I applied and was promoted to Assistant Center Manager, then to Center Manager!

During this time I earned a bachelor’s degree in Early Education, a Master’s of Science specializing in Special Education, and an Autism Spectrum Disorders certificate, thanks to LEO’s financial support. I currently serve all of our children and families as the Education and Access Manager.

My journey was not easy. I have had my share of personal obstacles along the way. However, I never gave up on myself or my goals. I am proud to say I am a role model to my daughter and to the children and families I have the privilege to serve.

Trisha-Lynne Coolong
Snapshots of a Great School Year

▲ Read to Me
We were honored to have State Representative Lori Ehrlich join us at our Jack Robinson Child Care Center to read to our children and tour our facility. Rep. Ehrlich, you did a wonderful job with “Pete the Cat” and “Brown Bear, Brown Bear”! Thank you for your compassionate leadership.

▲ Get on My Level
We had the pleasure of hosting Eve Kodiak, education consultant, at our Early Head Start Center in August. She provided an amazing training for our educators. “Recognize, Redirect, Release” is a neurological approach to teaching, learning, understanding, and flow. In a two-part event, she got right inside our classrooms, conducting circle times and nurturing behavioral issues. We are all better for this experience!

▲ If You Build It
Our little friends at the Broad Street classrooms got a new bike for the playground and worked together assembling it themselves! Ticking off all the boxes: hands-on, fine motor, gross motor, and building. This was a wonderful activity, and our children are showing real pride of ownership. Ride on, Broad Street!

▲ Bring in a Pro
When you have lots of questions about recycling, you want answers from the top! Jacqlyn Culwell is Lynn’s Recycling Coordinator. She stopped by to teach the children at Blossom Street Head Start proper recycling by playing sorting games. Perfect way to round out the “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” curriculum. Budding environmentalists!
Nutrition is the cornerstone to good health; it is key to brain development, especially during the earliest years. Low-income families are at risk for insufficient nutrition, which can result in life-long deficiencies in cognitive, motor, and social-emotional abilities. Data from the National Head Start Association shows that Head Start children have a marked advantage in physical health over their peers in other child care situations.

LEO addressed health and nutrition challenges every day in every center. In addition to the 116,927 servings we provided through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), LEO partnered with the American Red Cross Mobile Food Truck to distribute 1,810 cartons of fresh food this year, each designed to supplement a family’s staple groceries.

Parents learned firsthand about healthy snacks, recipes and portion control during family-style meals in the classroom, when they volunteered in our commercial kitchen or attended hands-on cooking demonstrations. Their participation often changed a family’s eating patterns, resulting in healthier body mass index and lower risk of obesity.

CACFP provides aid to child care and other institutions to provide nutritious foods that contribute to the wellness, healthy growth and development of young children, and the health and wellness of older adults and chronically impaired disabled persons. LEO is an equal opportunity provider.
A Decade with LEO

Q&A with Kassandra Jackson, Lead Teacher at Jack Robinson Child Care Center.

What is your educational background?
I am a Lynn native. I attended local schools right up through Lynn English High School. I obtained my associates degree in Early Childhood Education at North Shore Community College and my Bachelor of Arts degree (concentration in Early Childhood Studies) at Lesley University.

What positions have you held inside the agency?
Assistant Teacher, Lead Teacher, Afterschool Group Leader, Afterschool Program Manager and I recently happily returned to Lead Teacher. I am excited to get back to school for my master’s degree.

Can you recall a moment at LEO where you saw a marked success in the life of a child or family?
One that immediately comes to mind is when I had conducted a home visit, and a mother shared how thankful she was for the work we do at LEO. She said her child was so defiant and aggressive she had to leave her place of employment because she was getting called daily to speak with her son or to pick him up. She was so concerned and didn’t know where to begin to help him. Since starting at LEO, her son was less defiant, open to trying new foods, helping out at home and able to positively interact with his peers. She was thankful for our open communication. She needed to hear his struggles but also his successes.

What is one word you would use to describe LEO?
LEO is resourceful. When it comes to helping our community, we leave no stone unturned.

Do you have a mentor at LEO?
Mary Ellen Jenkins and Catalina Soto have been there for me since the day I started working for this agency. Helen Butler stepped up the day she started working for LEO. All have helped me grow as a teacher, woman and friend. They have praised my successes and were there for my downfalls, helping me get back up and learn from them. These three amazing woman truly want to see me succeed not only in this agency but in life.

You brought your Dad into LEO to work with your students, what was that experience like?
How many people get to say they ran football drills with their Dad at work?! I enjoyed seeing my Dad with my students. He really was a natural. The experience was sort of my “ah ha” moment because I saw that I get my love of helping and working with people from him. He has been a football coach longer than I have been alive, yet I never had the opportunity to see him coach. I have heard the stories of Coach Jackson from almost everyone in Lynn. The entire experience was pure joy!
Aspire

- 5 clinicians daily provide early intervention services at Stepping Stones Family Child Care Center
- Conduct practice-based coaching to integrate services for children who have experienced trauma
- In-kind services to LEO valued at $510,772

Bridgwell
Catholic Charities
Centerboard
Citizens Energy
City of Lynn
Community Giving Tree
Cradles to Crayons
Element Care
Elliott Community Human Services
Emergency Food & Shelter National Program
Enough Abuse Campaign
Essex County Community Foundation
Family & Children’s Services of Greater Lynn
First Jobs
Greater Lynn Chamber of Commerce
Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)
Greater Boston Food Bank
Healing Abuse Working for Change (HAWC)
Iglesia de Jesucristo de los Santos de los Ultimos Dios
Impact Lynn
Justice Resource Institute
KIPP Academy
Latino Support Network
La Voz
Lynn Community Health Center
Lynn Continuum of Care
Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development (LHAND)
Lynn Public Library
Lynn Public Schools
Lynn Rapid Response Network
Lynn Shelter Association
Lynn YMCA
Lynnfield Council on Aging
MA Assoc. for Community Action (MassCAP)
MA Assoc. of Early Education & Care (MADCA)
MA Coalition for the Homeless
MA Dept. of Children & Families (DCF)
MA Dept. of Transitional Assistance (DTA)
MA Dept. of Youth Services (DYS)
MA Head Start Association
MA Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)
MA Working on Wellness
MassHire North Shore Career Center
Mission of Deeds
My Brother’s Table
Nahant Council on Aging
New American Association of Massachusetts
North Shore Community College
North Shore Housing Action Group (NSHAG)
North Shore Women Infants and Children (WIC)
Northeast Justice Center
Passport Camps
Pathways
Project COPE, an affiliate of Bridgwell
Salem State University
Salvation Army
Santa’s Helping Hands
Saugus Senior Center
Society of St. Vincent de Paul
St. Joseph Parish
Swampscott Council on Aging
Toys for Tots
United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley
Wakefield Council on Aging
Women’s Fund of Essex County

Partnerships and Affiliations

- 5 clinicians daily provide early intervention services at Stepping Stones Family Child Care Center
- Conduct practice-based coaching to integrate services for children who have experienced trauma
- In-kind services to LEO valued at $510,772

63 early childhood educators participated in 14-16 hours of training, resulting in:
- A decrease in disruptive behaviors in the classroom
- New techniques for transitions and de-escalation of disruptive situations
- Innovative approaches for working with children with challenging behaviors
On any given day, you can find a small team from LEO’s Community Services Office hitting the road to meet potential clients in locations they already frequent. As time and transportation constraints make it more challenging for people to come to us, we have significantly expanded our community outreach efforts year-round.

Thanks to a grant from Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS), a close nonprofit partner, LEO sends at least one intake specialist out weekly to qualify and register senior citizens for home heating fuel assistance. Lynna Chear and Petra Sanchez, bilingual in Khmer and Spanish, have combined 37 years’ experience at LEO. They staff the mobile Community Services Office at locations that are convenient and comfortable for the silver generation: GLSS, senior centers, councils on aging, and public libraries. Our goal? To qualify up to 100 individuals annually who will benefit from financial subsidies and discounts on home heating.

Darlene Gallant, Director of Community Services at LEO, knows that the practice of “meeting people where they are” makes a genuine difference. “There is a lack of education and referrals for resources that can benefit older or non-English speaking residents. Lynna and Petra have earned the trust of both these populations, who realize LEO can help them stretch their monthly income. A safer, more comfortable living environment can certainly improve your golden years.”
With services in Weatherization and Conservation constantly in demand, we were proud to be able to grow our team to include two new hires. In less than a year, their impact can be felt inside our agency as well as outside in our service areas.

Diana Mueses works as an Administrative Assistant for our Conservation program. With a strong service background, a tech savvy approach, and the ability to work in a fast paced environment, Diana became an asset almost immediately. Every experience our clients have is based upon the first point of contact. Diana makes a great first impression, easing tension in what could be a stressful process. Diana soaked up knowledge fast, and is a keeping us running strong.

Alex Amely work as an Energy Auditor/AMP Specialist in the Weatherization office. He offers energy improvement recommendations, while implementing best practices between contractors, home owners, and customers. Alex was not new to LEO; he worked with us in the Maintenance area before making this career move. His knowledge of buildings and our agency made his transition smooth. We are able to make many more service calls and household visits with his contribution.
Fiesta de LEO

Fiesta de LEO gets better each year! On June 13th, the Lynn Museum shined with diversity — a reflection of our colorful, caring community. Every now and then, the right people assemble in one place and it all just works. Thank you to our sponsors, guests and staff for your part in making this a unique and interactive event. At the end of a lively, fun-filled night, we raised $33,000 towards our annual goal.

Passport: The Kids Are Alright!

We were honored to have the young people from Passport Mission Camp with us for an entire week in June. They invested in a handful of volunteer improvement projects throughout our agency, starting with our outdoor play space, taking it from drab to fab! They re-marked our parking spots and painted our conference room. It is amazing what a little paint and a lot of heart can do. LEO loves Passport; thanks for spreading your special kind of joy.

Long Distance Love

Two amazing kids sold their handmade drawings and finger knitted pieces at the Newburyport Youth Services craft fair to benefit LEO! They worked for months leading up to the show and never accepted a penny of the profits. They even answered questions about our agency and told customers they were “helping families.” Zoe Cough (8) and Vivian Hebeisen (7) together raised $264, in just 2 hours of selling! We are honored by your talents and your generous hearts. Thank you, from our community to yours.

ALL for ANG:

LEO received a check for $7,500, the shared proceeds from the ALL for ANG 5k run/walk in November. Angela Conte Iannalfo was a wife, mother of three, a teacher, runner, and philanthropic to LEO. Her family continues the giving in her memory. We used these funds in a variety of ways, including to support trauma-informed care and to support families in crisis. Thank you to the endlessly generous Conte, Schena, and Iannalfo families. This is a profound gift for LEO!
Expenses by Category

- Early Childhood Development: 35%
- Energy: 13%
- Administration & Fundraising: 4%
- Community Service: 48%

Functional Expenses

- Personnel: 30%
- Pass Through: 12%
- Program Support: 6%
- Occupancy: 2%
- Other: 50%

Revenue by Category

- Contract Revenue: 65%
- Earned Revenue: 21%
- Grants & Contributions: 8%
- In-Kind Revenue: 5%
- Other: 1%

- LEO Inc. expenses totaled $11,572,371.
- LEO’s largest program is Early Childhood Development, representing half of our operations.
- LEO relies on human capital to provide services to children, families and the community; as a result, 50% of our costs goes to salaries and benefits.
- LEO receives pass-through funds for home heating, heating system safety, and weatherization; it is paid out directly to vendors on behalf of income-qualified households.
- Occupancy costs are significant due to licensing requirements for preschool classrooms and common spaces.
- LEO operates efficiently. Overhead costs are low; only 13% is spent on Administration & Fundraising.

• LEO continues to have very stable funding.
• Competitive federal and state grants are the foundation that supports Early Childhood Development.
• Private philanthropic grants and contributions are essential to meet cost sharing requirements, to provide resources and services beyond basic programming, and to provide for capital maintenance and improvements.

NOTE: During the year ending September 30, 2019, LEO Inc. launched a capital campaign to raise funds to improve facilities. The leadership of LEO anticipates a $9.5-$10.5 million campaign.
**Durable Goods Grant**

Our play space received a make-over! Our children LOVE all the interactive moments; the quiet spaces to think and dream, and the hands-on stops to get creative! The new outdoor classroom equipment at Jack Robinson Child Care Center was awarded to LEO as a QRIS Improvement Durable Goods Grant from the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) — a competitive grant awarded to early education programs poised to achieve the highest quality ratings granted by EEC.

**A Party with a Purpose**

Thank you to Jan and Joe Monahan for hosting a wonderful Christmas party to benefit LEO. Thousands of diapers, wipes, and loads of baby formula. Some guests even brought checks to support our Fuel Assistance Emergency Fund. Talk about true holiday spirit. LEO is blessed by this amazing group, and proud to call you all friends.

**Constellation Grant**

Thanks to the kindness of the good people at Constellation Energy, and the generosity of their Community Champions Grant, we have invested more into our Strong Male Role Models program here at LEO. Our recent movie night was a huge success! So many wonderful fathers and father figures attended. We watched the movie Coco, ate pizza and each child left with a lovey to snuggle. As we foster the Head Start two-generation approach to learning, encouraging the men in our children’s lives to be a supportive and nurturing presence is key to family success.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Amount Range</th>
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<td>$20,000+</td>
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Philanthropic Support

Gifts up to $100
Amy Smith Christophel
Trisha Coolong*
Dr. Jay M. Epstein, DMD, PC
John Greeley
Elizabeth Hilton
Mary Ellen Jenkins*
Gordon Massey
Nicole McClain
McGloin & Associates
Theresa McMillin*
Mykito Property Maintenance
Ruth Njogore*
Lori Rosen*
A.J. Kirirath Saing
Eric Vaughn
Thelma Velasquez*
James Wilson*

Gifts of Goods & Services
Leslie & Carmine Beatrice
Bridget Bertrand*
Elizabeth Blodgett-Smith
Helen Butler*
Chase the Chill Lynn MA
Trisha Coolong*
Birgitta S. Damon*
The Demakes Families
Helen DeMars
Dotted Dog Design
Edible Arrangements
E.W. Hobbs Inc.
Far from the Tree Hard Cider
Nereida Flores*
Marilyn Foster*
Mary Giguere*
Greater Lynn Chamber of Commerce
JL Electrical & Energy Savers Contractor
Mary Ellen Jenkins*
Kelly’s Roast Beef
Lynn First Responders Giving Group
Lynn Memorial Auditorium
Paula Mackin
The Magic Brush
Market Basket
Jennifer Mauche*
Nicole McClain*
Lisa McFadden*
Theresa McMillin*
Mission on the Bay
Notch Brewing
The Oceanaire Seafood Room
O’Neill’s Irish Pub & Restaurant
Lisa Pelonzi Portrait, Commercial & Fine Art Photography
Diane Perez*
Marilyn Perry*
Philanthropy MA
Polartec LLC
Lori Rosen*
Joyce Rossi Demas
The Sisterhood
Superior Radio
T Stop
Teamsters Local 42
Thai Café/BC Siam Corp.
Tides Restaurant & Pub
David Workman

† Multi-year pledge

* LEO is especially grateful for donations from our staff and board members, who also contribute generously of their time and talent.
Blossom Street Child Care Center
(ages 3 – 5)
110 Blossom Street
Lynn, MA 01902
781.309.5570

Broad Street Child Care Classrooms
(ages 3 – 5)
156 Broad Street
Lynn, MA 01901
781.581.7220

Early Head Start
Home-Based Program
(birth – 3)
156 Broad Street
Lynn, MA 01901
781.581.7220

Jack Robinson Child Care Center
(ages 3 – 5)
38 Commercial Street
Lynn, MA 01905
781.309.5540

Stepping Stones
Family Child Care Center
(birth – 3)
35 Waitt Avenue
Lynn, MA 01902
781.309.5531