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## Private Donation to Assist Immigrant Children

September 29, 2014

By Record Staff

A sizable donation **Recommend** 5 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends. to the Chelsea

Collaborative and the Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) will assist unaccompanied immigrant children, who have fled their home countries and ended up in Chelsea, as hundreds of the children enter the public school system this year.

The Chelsea Collaborative and Greater Boston Legal Services announced a \$40,000 gift from immigration and higher education advocate Bob Hildreth that will support the sheltering, feeding and providing legal services for the estimated 600 unaccompanied minors who traveled across the US border over the past two years and landed in Chelsea. About 300 of the children are expected to enter the public schools this year.

Gladys Vega, Executive Director of the Chelsea Collaborative that organized the response to the influx of children said, “When deciding to help, we only thought about what we were witnessing: we saw so many children coming through our doors in need. We knew that in order for a mother to make or to send her children on this journey it was because they were facing unimaginable violence in their country.”

Experts estimate that a public education costs about \$13,000 per student, annually. While Chelsea, a low-income community, will struggle to educate these immigrant children with no additional funding, the city has vowed to do its best. Hildreth intends to support that effort and calls on others to do the same.

Hildreth said, “These children are all of our responsibility. My donation will hopefully spur people in rich towns to join me in helping cities like Chelsea pay for the assistance they so willingly offer to immigrant children.”

Hildreth has a history of personally supporting efforts to address the needs of Greater Boston’s immigrants. His alliances run deep with the Chelsea Collaborative through his work with FUEL Education, and with GBLS with whom he helped bail out immigrants caught in the Bianca raid in New Bedford seven years ago.