

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



FRENCH CULTURAL CENTER
ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE OF BOSTON & CAMBRIDGE

A MESSAGE OF REFLECTION BY STEVEN GALANTE AND BARBARA BOUQUEGNEAU



"In the midst of every crisis, lies great opportunity."

This piece of wisdom, attributed to Albert Einstein, reflects the French Cultural Center's *mode de vie* during 2020. It is ironic that, in the year we expected to celebrate the Center's 75th anniversary, we had to shut the building entirely. But, along with you, we persisted, remaining safe – while meeting, learning, and sharing our love of French and French culture from the safety of home.

When the Covid-19 crisis hit in March, we moved all classes and cultural and social events online.

The Center's library staff quickly launched a curbside pickup program so children and adults would have continued access to French books, CDs and other material.

We stuck by our commitment to the Center's Accent on Success program, which provides free French language lessons to high school students in Boston's underserved neighborhoods.

And, over the summer, when health authorities said it was safe to meet in small groups, we began offering outdoor French-themed tours of Boston, plus wine tastings and gastronomy events, to bring members and friends together again *in person*.

Our members and participants were very encouraging, letting us know how important our programs were to them.

"Un grand merci pour le ciné-club. Ça m'a fait bien plaisir de me reconnecter avec vous et le French Cultural Center à propos d'un film que j'ai beaucoup aimé."

"On-line is fine, it saves time and cost of traveling from New Hampshire to Boston. I am starting to market these events to my friends in the Portsmouth area."

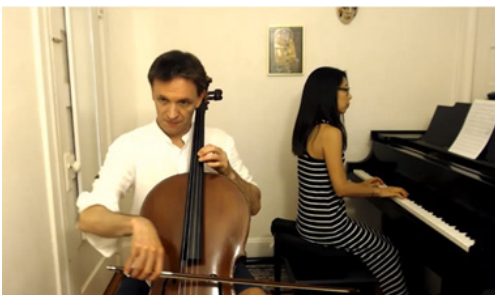
"During this crazy time, focusing on French grammar is a perfect way to keep calm."

"The Center was innovative in the face of the challenges of the pandemic, and the members have been the beneficiaries."

"The Center showed and inspired resilience by safely bringing us together outdoors and in a socially distanced manner for limited events throughout the pandemic, including a walk on the Esplanade on the coldest day of the year!"

Merci mille fois to the Center staff for their hard work and diligence in continuing our mission during difficult circumstances. Additionally, our Board of Trustees and Ambassador Club members were a key source of inspiration and direction. Their encouragement and support proved invaluable as we successfully navigated our way.

In the fall, with the pandemic's endpoint nowhere in sight, our Board of Trustees decided to take bold action...(cont.)





Rather than reopening while the health risk remained high, the Center chose to undergo a major building renovation that had been contemplated for years. In doing so, we turned the disruption of the Covid-19 crisis into an exciting opportunity to serve our supporters, members, and participants better.

In October we embarked on a complete renovation of 53 Marlborough Street. The project is expected to take sixteen months. Rest assured that the Center's classical beauty will not change. Rather, through careful design and execution, the renovation will:

- Expand classroom capacity for group and private language lessons.
- Make the children's suite larger, brighter, and more conducive to learning.
- Create new social spaces for conversation groups and workshops.
- Upgrade the kitchen to host a new gastronomy education program.
- Install a wine cellar to support a new wine appreciation program.

In addition, installation of an elevator will render all parts of the building accessible to people with limited mobility. Upgraded heating and air conditioning will make classes and events cozy in winter and comfortable in summer. An improved IT/WiFi network will strengthen learning and communications. A fire suppression/sprinkler system will safeguard the beautiful, 150-year-old building.

Our Board of Trustees has approved a \$6 million budget for the project. The ongoing capital campaign, which has raised \$3 million of a \$3.5M goal, will cover part of the expense.

Updates will be posted regularly on our renovation blog at fccrenovation.org. The French Cultural Center will retain its charm – and offer so much more!

During the two months that it took to completely empty the Center in preparation for the renovations, as we uncovered many artifacts that were tucked away, we reflected often on the individuals who founded The French Library in Boston Inc. in 1945 and on the more than 100 trustees who have guided the institution since then.

Most of all, we rejoiced in the fact that our current Board of Trustees and our donors demonstrated their commitment to sustaining our institution through these perilous times and to guiding it to bright new opportunities. This support during the crisis has been essential and sincerely appreciated.

2020 was a crazy, difficult year for all of us. But through it all, we experienced the strength of our Francophile community and are more committed to growing that community in 2021. Come 2022 we will be ready to open our doors to a new world of possibilities.

Bien à vous,

Steven P. Galante
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Barbara Bouqueneau
President & Executive Director

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The French Cultural Center realized a surplus of \$82,000 in 2020. The ability to maintain our programs online during the shutdown imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the generous support of our donors and the acquisition of a PPP loan were instrumental to our financial results. However, due to the pandemic, the FCC was unable to hold planned fundraising events in 2020, though some expenses were incurred prior to the shutdown.

As stated above, the Center received a PPP Loan through the SBA of approximately \$315,000. As this loan had not yet been fully forgiven in 2020, this amount is not included in 2020 Revenues. The forgiveness of this loan will be included in the 2021 results.

The Center also secured contributions to our ongoing Capital Campaign in the amount of \$104,000 reaching \$3M when renovations to our Center building, at 53 Marlborough Street, began in October. Renovation expenses will be supported by the campaign and a secured loan.

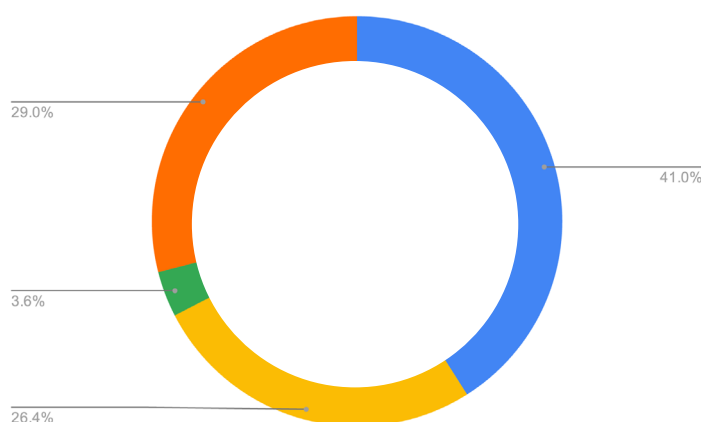
As of December 31, 2020 the Center's endowment was valued at \$17,528,300, an increase of 5% from 2019.

FY 2020 Revenue

Income from operations *	\$869,344	41.0%
Fundraising events	\$0	0%
Contributions	\$559,488	26.4%
Membership	\$75,696	3.6%
Endowment allocation **	\$615,452	29.0%
Total revenue	\$2,119,980	100%

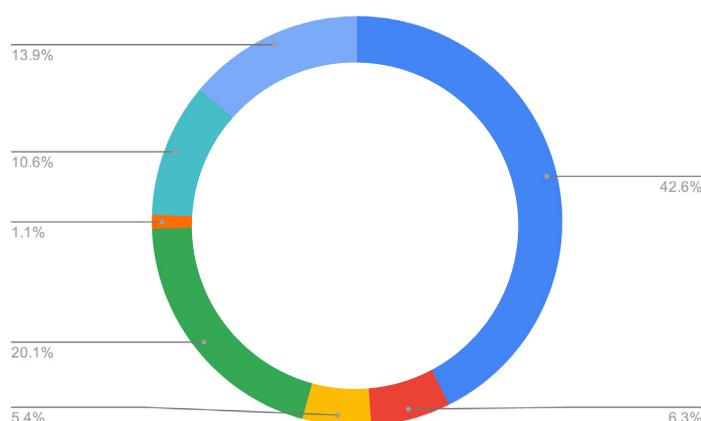
* Includes tuition, book sales, translation services, cultural event tickets, facility rentals and proficiency exam fees

** Represents the endowment funds approved by the Board of Trustees to support annual operations



FY 2020 Expenses

Educational programs	\$868,065	42.6%
Library programs	\$127,444	6.3%
Cultural programs	\$110,835	5.4%
General and administration	\$409,140	20.1%
Fundraising events	\$22,038	1.1%
Development	\$216,841	10.6%
Facilities and technology	\$283,435	13.9%
Total expenses	\$2,037,798	100%
Net income	\$82,182	



MANAGEMENT TEAM AND TRUSTEES OF THE FRENCH CULTURAL CENTER

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Barbara Bouqueneau

Chief Financial Officer

Michael Richard

Director of Education

Elisabeth Karnoub

Director of Development

Joyce Grippen

Marketing Manager

Joshua Stone

Cultural Programs Manager

Clémence Bary-Boloré

Membership Manager

Natalie Collet

Librarian

Ingrid Marquardt

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