

Boston Seniority

Age Strong Commission

City of Boston

Mayor Kim Janey



STEPPING INTO JOY p.14-19

Summer 2021
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Free Publication



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The Mayor's Joy Agenda is a citywide invitation to hold space for joy, encourage opportunities for collective processing of grief, and invest in healing, imagination and play. Go to **page 14** to see how you can participate by joining a Joy Walks walking club.



Boston Seniority

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Stay Connected with the Age Strong Commission:



Main number: (617) 635-4366



Website: www.boston.gov/age-strong



Facebook: @AgeStrongBos



Twitter: @AgeStrongBos

Do you have a story to share? We want to hear from you!

Email us at Bostonseniority@boston.gov

From the Mayor's Desk

The Power of Joy



Hello and Happy Summer to All!

I'm sure you'll agree that Boston is one special place in the summer. From our outdoor parks and community pools to harbor boat cruises and picnics -- Boston has a lot to offer in the warmer weather.

As we navigate our city during the pandemic, I invite you to join me for a new program called Joy Walks. These are walking clubs throughout all Boston neighborhoods that are part of my Joy Agenda, a city-wide invitation, opportunity, and investment in our collective well-being in Boston, which kicked off in May.

After over a year of incredible hardships caused by COVID-19 and acts of violence against communities of color across the country, we're looking at ways we can foster an equitable recovery that allows all residents of Boston to thrive. We believe that by emphasizing the power of joy in healing and growth, we'll come back together as a stronger, more welcoming city.

Joy Walks will bring you and other older adults back into our communities, to reconnect with friends and neighbors. Together, seniors will enjoy our outdoor spaces and get exercise, benefiting both physical and mental health.

While you're walking this summer, why not visit one of over a dozen Boston Farmers Markets? Gather up your favorite, fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables that are in season. Don't forget that our Farmers Markets take SNAP (supplemental nutrition assistance program) and HIP (healthy incentives program), too!

Grab your sneakers, and grab a friend. It's time for Joy in Boston!

Sincerely,

-Mayor Kim Janey



PS, If you walk so much that your feet need a break, don't forget about the Age Strong Commission's taxi coupon program! Learn about it inside.

▶ Book Picks

Summer Reading for History/ Historical Fiction Fans

Source: Boston Public Library

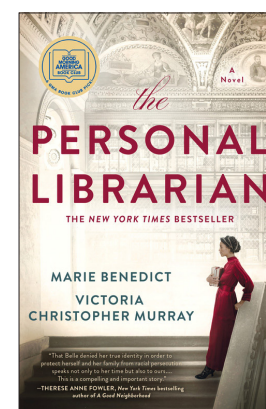
Whether you are at home or away this summer, take the opportunity to catch up on some of the latest must-read history/ historical fiction books.



The Four Winds by Kristin Hannah

The bestselling author of *The Nightingale* brings the Dust Bowl era to life in this epic tale of a woman who must choose between trying to save the family farm or moving west to

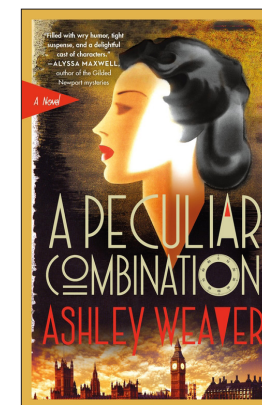
California in search of a better life for herself and her young children.



The Personal Librarian by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray

A fictionalized account of the life of Belle da Costa Greene. In the early 20th century she became J. P. Morgan's

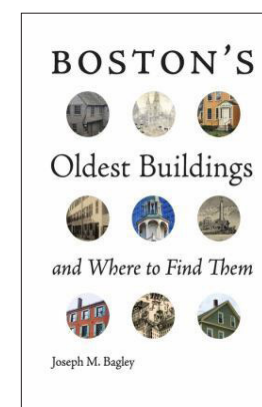
personal librarian, and a powerful figure in the New York city art world, while at the same time hiding her Black heritage to protect her position.



A Peculiar Combination by Ashley Weaver

If you're a fan of historical fiction and also enjoy a bit of mystery and suspense, check out this first entry in a new World War II-era series featuring Electra McDonnell. Electra

is a young Londoner, and an expert safecracker, who uses her unique skills to help the British war effort.



Boston's Oldest Buildings and Where to Find Them by Joseph M. Bagley

Take a trip through history with Bagley, the city archaeologist of Boston, as he explores 50 of Boston's oldest buildings.



The Rose Code by Kate Quinn

Quinn (*The Alice Network*) brings the secret world of Bletchley Park to life with this story of three World War II female codebreakers.

For more titles or BPL info, visit bpl.org or call 617-536-5400.

Beat the Heat: Summer Cooling and Walking Tips

Summer is the perfect time to spend your days outdoors and reconnect with nature. Whether you like to tend to your garden or walk by the water at Castle Island, spending some time in the sun is a great way to calm your mind and revive your senses.

The more time you spend outside this summer means the more time that you are walking. Summer safety is very important while walking throughout Boston in the heat.

Here are some tips:

- Choose a familiar route that is flat and free of obstacles
- Wear supportive footwear
- Avoid rushing - rushing increases your risk of falling
- Walk with friends

6 Tips for Summer

Tip 1

NEVER leave children or pets in the car



Tip 2

Drink water and stay hydrated



Tip 3

Wear loose, lightweight, breathable clothing (cotton is best)



Did you know?

If the City of Boston declares an extreme heat event, you will receive a direct message via text, call, or email if you sign up for AlertBoston. Contact the Office of Emergency Management at 617-635-1400 or oem@boston.gov for more information.

Tip 4

Visit public cooling centers like Boston Centers for Youth & Families



Tip 5

Even a bag of frozen veggies placed on your neck can cool you down



Tip 6

Shut window shades, turn off lights, keep windows open, turn on fans



Key Terms

• **Heat Exhaustion:** An illness that can come before a heatstroke. Symptoms include heavy sweating, rapid breathing and a fast, weak pulse.

• **Heatstroke:** Is a life-threatening illness. The body temperature may rise above 106 degrees in only a few minutes. Symptoms include dry skin, rapid, strong pulse and dizziness.

• **Heat Emergency:** Three or more days of temperatures above 90° F.

For more information call the Age Strong Commission at 617-635-4366.



Aging Strong as a Centenarian

By Andrew Higginbottom, *Age Strong*, Staff Assistant

At 100 years old, Eleanor Hardy Webb continues to **Age Strong**. The Mattapan resident attributes her longevity to “faith and trust in God.” Her faith has guided her throughout her life and she has been a devoted member of the Twelfth Baptist Church in Roxbury since 1962. Prior to arriving in Boston, Webb had struggled with poverty and racism while growing up in Mantua, Alabama.

“If it weren’t for God, I wouldn’t have made it,” said Eleanor.”

An activist in the Civil Rights movement, Webb remembers when Dr. Martin

Luther King Jr. led a Civil Rights march in her town in Alabama. Dr. King was headquartered in the first Baptist Church near the Webb home where she lived with her husband, Eddie, and her four daughters. After participating in the march, Webb and her family faced consequences. The Webb children had their schools closed and her husband lost his job.

Webb left Alabama shortly after and moved with her family to Dorchester in the early 1960s. She quickly became involved in the community and her church. She remembers the conversation about joining the Roxbury church.



*Eleanor
in her
Boston
Police
Uniform*

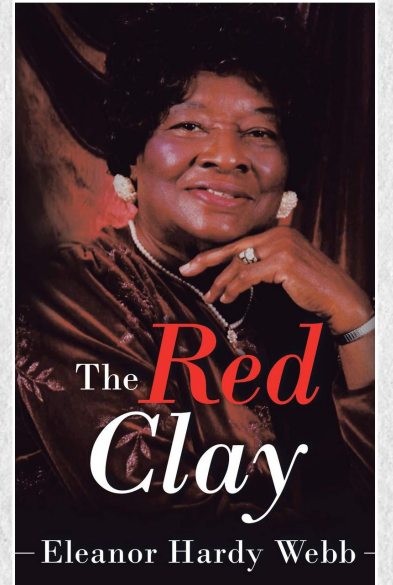
“A neighbor asked, “Why don’t you come and go with me?” Afterward, I joined with Reverend Haynes,” said Webb. “Some of the reverends that are at the church today were just teenagers when I arrived in Boston.”

Since she has been in Boston, Webb has focused on helping the youth and her family. She nurtured children of all ages and has parented over thirty foster children throughout her life. She tells them the stories of her past to help them understand history.

“Family is the glue that holds us together. We have to keep the stories of the past fresh in our minds. I want my family and friends to understand what life was like and how tough life was during my childhood. Things are different now and we are still living strong. The lord has kept me safe all these years to share my journey with the

young and to appreciate the past.”

In addition to caring for children and her family, Webb has been a strong advocate of education and learning.



Eleanor's book The Red Clay

She taught at the Holland School in Dorchester and furthered her own education in computer science and nursing science. She then joined the Boston Police force as a school crossing supervisor where she worked for a number of years.

“We have to keep the stories of the past fresh in our minds.”

Webb’s most recent endeavor was writing her own book, *The Red Clay*, which focused on her upbringing during the height of segregation in Alabama and details her life throughout the years. She stays physically active by doing aerobics, gardening, and participating in senior programs at the Twelfth Baptist Church. Mrs. Webb’s life’s journey demonstrates tenets of her church: purpose, power, praise, and prayer.

► Food Access

Boston's Summer Farmers Markets

Affordable, fresh, healthy produce is available throughout the city

Summer is a great time to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables, and Boston's neighborhoods offer a variety of farmers markets to go shopping. Through the Mayor's Office of Food Access, Boston's residents can save while eating healthy -- **farmers markets accept SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Plan) and HIP (Health Incentive Program), too!**

Farmers Market Locations:

► **Ashmont Farmers Market**

Friday, 3pm-7pm

► **Boston Public Market at Dewey Square on the Greenway**

Thursday, 11am-4pm

► **Brighton Farmers Market**

Wednesday, 2pm-6:30pm

► **Chinatown Farmers Market**

Saturday, 10am-4pm

► **Copley Square Farmers Market**

Friday, 11am-6pm

► **Charlestown Farmers Market**

Wednesday, 2pm-6:30pm

► **Codman Square Farmers Market**

Saturday, 11am-2pm

► **East Boston Farmers Market**

Wednesday, 3pm-6:30pm

Did you know?

Food Access

Healthy, nutritious food for all, including SNAP, farmers markets, & community fridges

► **Jamaica Plain Center Street Farmers Market**

Tuesday, 12pm-5pm

Saturday, 12pm-5pm

► **Mattapan Square Farmers Market**

Saturday, 10am-1pm

► **Mission Hill Farmers Market**

Thursday, 11am-6pm

► **Roxbury Crossing Farmers Market**

Tuesday, 11am-6pm

Friday, 11am-6pm

► **Seaport Farmers Market**

Thursday, 2pm-6pm

► **South Boston Farmers Market**
Monday, 12pm-6pm

The Age Strong Commission is a SNAP Outreach Center and our advocates can fully assist seniors with applying for SNAP benefits. Call Age Strong at 617- 635-4366.

For more information about Food Access or farmers markets, visit boston.gov/food or call 617-635-3717.

For help signing up for SNAP or HIP call Age Strong at 617-635-4366.

August Happenings: Get Out and About in Boston!

** Please note not all events are free and are subject to change*

August 21
Jamaica Pond Walking Tour
Time: 11:00 am
Location: Jamaica Pond, Jamaica Plain
Contact Info: info@jphs.org

August 22
Boston GreenFest
Time: 12:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Location: Rose Kennedy Greenway, Atlantic Ave.
Contact Info: 617-477-4840

August 23
Parks Fitness: Vinyasa Yoga w/ Carla
Time: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Location: Lopresti Park (Green Space near Sumner & New Streets) 33 Sumner St., East Boston
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

August 24
Parks Fitness: Salsa with Metamovements
Time: 6:00 pm
Location: O'Day Playground, 75 West Newton St., South End
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

August 25
Parks Fitness: Chair Yoga with Karma
Time: 10:00 am - 11:00 am
Location: Symphony Park, 39 Edgerly Rd.
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

August 26
ICA Free Thursday Nights
Time: 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Location: Institute of Contemporary Art, 25 Harbor Shore Dr., Seaport
Contact Info: 617-478-3100

Did you know?

Main Streets

20 locations across Boston neighborhoods
community resources, services & events

August 27
Friday Afternoon Concert Series
Time: 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Location: 1 City Hall Square, Boston
Contact Info: 617-635-3911

August 29
Ice Cream Social
Time: 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Location: Reverend Loesch Family Park, 20 Wainwright St., Dorchester
Contact Info: 678-760-7948

August 30
Hyde Park Movie Night
Time: 7:45 pm
Location: Iacona Playground, 150 Readville St., Hyde Park
Contact Info: 617-635-4505

Mayor Kim Janey's Neighborhood Coffee Hours 9:30 am - 10:30 am

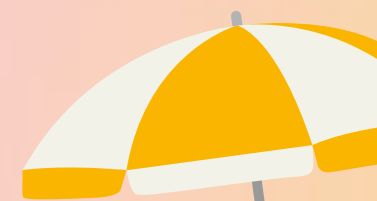
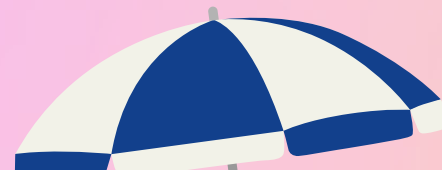
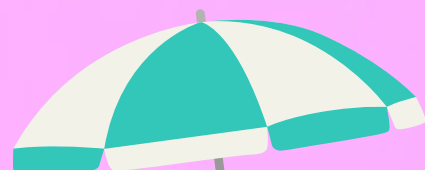
► **Friday, August 20:**
Fenway/Jamaica Plain
Location: James P. Kelleher Rose Garden - 73 Park Dr., Back Bay Fens

► **Monday, August 23:**
Allston/Brighton
Location: Smith Playground
235 Western Ave., Allston-Brighton

► **Friday, August 27:**
Mattapan/Hyde Park
Location: Almont Park
40 Almont St., Mattapan

**Dates and times are subject to change*

Consult social media for weather cancellations:
Facebook: @bostonparksdepartment
Twitter: @bostonparksdept
617-635-4505
boston.gov/parks



STEPPING INTO JOY



**INVITING
BOSTON'S OLDER
ADULTS TO STEP
OUT TOGETHER
THIS SUMMER**

As part of Mayor Kim Janey's Joy Agenda, she and Boston's Age Strong Commission invite the city's older adults to join JOY WALKS, walking clubs in each Boston neighborhood this summer and fall.

-Boston Seniority Team

JOY WALKS FOR BOSTON'S OLDER ADULTS

As part of her Joy Agenda, Mayor Kim Janey and the Age Strong Commission announce “Joy Walks,” public walking clubs for older Bostonians. A Joy Walks Challenge will take place September through October throughout all Boston neighborhoods and are free, and open to all.

“We’re inviting our older adults citywide, to join with friends, neighbors, and families outdoors, as we all reconnect post Covid,” Mayor Janey says. “We are making space in all Boston neighborhoods to hold hope and joy, and promote both better physical and mental health, after many months in isolation.”

Joy Walks will take place in Boston neighborhoods, and “are a safe way for older adults to socialize outdoors in open-air spaces,” says Emily Shea, Age Strong Commissioner. “It will be wonderful to see so many of Boston’s older adults enjoying each other, the outdoor weather, and joy through movement.”

Joy Walks will award prizes to participants in categories including most miles walked by a group, most miles walked by a duo, and most number of walks by a group. Joy Walks participants will enjoy complimentary pedometers, water bottles, and t-shirts.

Joy Walkers may also consider walking at designated Age Friendly walking paths--over 20 walking paths in Boston that are smooth surfaced, stair-free, with parking close by.

To view a list of Age Friendly walking paths, visit boston.gov/agefriendlywalks or call Age Strong at 617-635-4366.

**"IF YOU WANT TO WALK FAST,
WALK ALONE. BUT IF YOU
WANT TO WALK FAR,
WALK TOGETHER."** -African Proverb



REACH OUT & SIGN UP!

Residents and existing walking clubs may sign up by Wednesday, August 25 in person at Boston Centers for Youth and Families locations, or by reaching Renee Frechette at the Age Strong Commission at 617.635.4168 or renee.frechette@boston.gov.

10 BENEFITS OF JOINING A WALKING CLUB



Socialize & re-connect with folks after Covid

Walking can help alleviate stress, depression & anxiety



Meet other older adults & neighbors in your community



Walking can help with weight loss



Walking can help lower blood pressure & cholesterol



Walking can help slow down mental decline from aging



Walking helps build strong muscles & bones



Walking can help aid digestion, circulation & sleep



Walking can help alleviate arthritis pain & lower blood sugar



By joining the Joy Walks challenge, you are eligible to win prizes!



► In Boston, we Age Strong.

As part of the Health and Human Services cabinet, our mission is to enhance your life with meaningful programs, resources, and connections so together we can live and age strong together in Boston.



We can help with:

Call us for more details at 617-635-4366.



Access to Information and Benefits:

Community Advocates connect seniors to a comprehensive array of resources, benefits, and information. We can:

- Assist with applications for public benefits like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and fuel assistance.
- Ease the process of applying for, and receiving, Medicare benefits.
- Assist older adults access several tax relief exemptions and programs like the Elderly Exemption 41C, Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit and more.
- Assist older adults with navigating systems including the aging network and city services.



Outreach and Engagement:

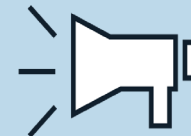
The Commission organizes many events and programs throughout the year. From large city-wide celebratory events to smaller neighborhood focused gatherings, we engage with older residents on many levels.



Transportation:

We are committed to helping people continue to lead independent lives by connecting them to transportation resources. We offer:

- Free wheelchair-accessible shuttles that provide door-to-door service for non-emergency doctor's appointments. Call 617-635-3000 for more information.
- Taxi Coupons at discounted rates.



Volunteer Opportunities:

We operate volunteer programs in impact driven work across the city:

- *RSVP* matches seniors with valuable volunteer opportunities in Boston.
- The *Senior Companion Program* matches seniors with homebound persons who need assistance.
- *Senior Greeters* volunteer their time to greet guests of City Hall.
- *Senior Property Tax Work-Off Program*: Qualified senior homeowners get the opportunity to work-off up to \$1,500 on their property tax bill by volunteering for a City agency.



Housing:

The Age Strong Commission works to ensure that older adults are able to find and maintain housing. We can:

- Assist with housing applications.
- Connect older adults with other City and community agencies that can provide resources for home repair and other challenging situations like hoarding.
- Provide mediation and court advocacy.



Alzheimer's and Caregiver Support:

Know that you are not alone; we are here to support you. We:

- Host Memory Cafés, which are places where individuals experiencing memory loss and their caretakers can meet in a safe, social environment.
- Provide referrals and offer workshops, training, and support groups for those who are supporting an older loved one.

► Transportation

How to Buy Taxi Coupons

Did you know that our Taxi Coupon program is back? Discounted taxi coupons are available for Boston residents age 65 and older and persons with disabilities. Coupons can be used in taxis licensed by the City of Boston. Below are the eligibility requirements and how to buy taxi coupons.

► Step 1: Eligibility requirements

We offer taxi coupons to Boston residents 65 and older or disabled. Please show an ID showing your Boston residency. Each coupon book costs \$5, please pay with cash. Coupons don't expire. Each resident may buy 2 coupons each month. The coupons are valid for taxis licensed by the city of Boston. For a limited time residents may buy 4 coupon booklets per month.

► Step 2: How and where to purchase

Coupons are available at the Age Strong Commission. Our office hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.- 5 p.m. Our office is located at:

1 City Hall Square, Room 271
Boston, MA 02201



Coupons are also sold at sites across Boston. To view the locations visit boston.gov/taxicoupons or call Age Strong at 617-635-4366.

The Age Strong Shuttles are also another resource for transportation. We provide Boston residents age 60 and older with free transportation within the City of Boston to non-emergency medical appointments and grocery trips, with advance notice. We also have wheelchair-accessible shuttles. Call us at 617-635-3000 to set up a ride.



► Outdoor Safety

Mosquito Bite Prevention

Source: *Boston Public Health Commission*

West Nile virus (WNV) is a rare, but serious disease, most often spread to people by the bite of an infected mosquito. WNV is found in Boston mosquitoes every year during the summer and fall months (June – November). Read this Q&A to learn how to protect yourself from mosquito-borne illnesses.

What diseases are spread by mosquitoes? Mosquitos in Boston can spread WNV and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). People can get WNV or EEE when an infected mosquito bites them. Mosquitoes get these diseases by biting infected birds, but people cannot get WNV or EEE from birds. Most people bitten by infected mosquitoes experience no symptoms or mild symptoms, but some can develop serious disease.

Do people in Boston get sick from mosquitoes? WNV has been found in Boston mosquitoes every year since 2000 and has caused some people to get very sick. EEE is found occasionally in Boston mosquitoes. Cases of EEE in people are extremely rare in Boston, but can happen.

Am I at risk? Mosquitoes in Boston are most active and most likely to carry disease from July to September, but can spread diseases until the first hard frost (as



late as November). People over age 50 are most at risk to experience serious illness if they are infected with WNV.

What should I do if a mosquito bites me? Both WNV and EEE are rare, and it is unlikely that you will get sick from a mosquito bite. However, you should contact your doctor immediately if you develop high fever, confusion, severe headache, stiff neck, or if your eyes become sensitive to light.

How can I help prevent mosquito-borne illnesses? If you are outdoors from dusk to dawn, or in an area with mosquitoes, consider these options to stop mosquito bites:

- Use an EPA-approved repellent anytime you're outdoors
- Wear long pants, long sleeves and socks to reduce exposed skin outdoors
- Repair torn screens to keep mosquitoes outside.

For more information visit bphc.org or call 617-534-5395.

► Contest

Mayor's Garden Contest

Source: Boston Parks and Recreation Department

The annual Mayor's Garden Contest is a city-wide celebration of urban gardening, recognizing gardeners who have landscaped, planted flowers, vegetables, trees, and shrubs, helping beautify Boston's neighborhoods.

Part of Mayor Kim Janey's citywide beautification initiative, the Garden Contest recognizes winners with the "Golden Trowel" award, who will also be entered to win a grand prize of two roundtrip tickets on JetBlue for non-stop travel from Boston. Additional support is provided by Mahoney's Garden Centers and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Further, winners who have won three or more times will be inducted into the Garden Contest Hall of Fame.

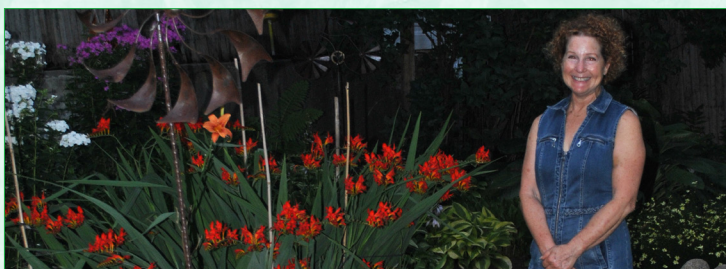
The contest is for Boston residents who are amateur gardeners. But, businesses and other groups can submit in the "Storefront, Organization, or Main Street District Garden" category. Applicants may enter one category each year.

Gardens are judged on general appeal and neatness, natural or formal layout, use of color plant material, variety and quality of plants, and, sustainable features and methods used to create the garden. The awards ceremony will be in late August. For more information, visit boston.gov/mayorsgardencontest or call 617-635-7275.

The 2021 Age Strong Garden Category finalists include:



Janice Dunlevy, *Dorchester*



Arlene Simon, *Dorchester*



Maria Termini, *Roslindale*



Nancy Thimble, *Hyde Park*



Natalia Torbina, *Fenway Victory Gardens*



Free Remote Worker Training for Older Adults

Operation Able, through federal funds from the Department of Labor, offers free training for older adults who want to be remote workers -- working from home. Those 55+, who are unemployed Massachusetts residents, may apply for a 20-week virtual skills training, taking place online through video conferencing.

Training features setting up a secure home office, skill instruction on Microsoft Office software, choice of subject-matter training in customer service, accounting, or medical office administration. Training also features instruction in online job searching, access to technology, Wi-Fi, and technical support.

There are 2 cycles: one in fall and one in the spring. The first cycle starts on September 13, 2021. Contact Mark Gyurina, Chief Program Officer at Operation Able: mgyurina@operationable.net or 617-308-1947.



Hyde Park & Adams Street Library Branches Reopen!



Two of our previously closed Branches have reopened for in-person service! The Hyde Park Branch was closed for a \$300,000 waterproofing and maintenance project, and the Adams Street Branch was closed for an \$18.3 million reconstruction and redesign.

For more information visit bpl.org/news or call 617-536-5400.

► Seen Around Town



AGE+

City of Boston
Age Strong Commission
Mayor Kim Janey



“Anything is possible
when you have the
right people there to
support you.”

-Misty Copeland