



About Just-A-Start

Just-A-Start Corporation (JAS) is a non-profit community development corporation dedicated to building the housing security and economic stability of low- to moderate-income people in Cambridge and nearby communities. For over 40 years, the organization has played a vital role in increasing the economic security of local low- to moderate-income individuals and families. Through innovative, comprehensive, and integrated programs, JAS provides and preserves affordable housing, offers education and workforce training for youth and adults, and builds community engagement. JAS's vision is a better future for all of its constituents: a secure home, a sustaining career, and engagement in the community.

JAS's primary service area is Cambridge, a city that is home to two economically divergent communities. The city's growth has created substantial wealth, but this has exacerbated problems accessing affordable housing. High housing costs have eroded the financial security of many lower income residents, sometimes forcing them to relocate. JAS's programs and services provide these individuals with housing options and the skills and knowledge to attain upward economic mobility, helping to maintain the city's economic diversity.

2016 Community Investment Plan (CIP)

JAS's community investment plan incorporates an array of programs and services to provide comprehensive housing, education and career development, and community resources to low- to moderate-income individuals and families in Cambridge that foster short-term housing and financial stability and long-term economic mobility. JAS's strategy includes:

Provide affordable housing and housing resources and supports to over 2,500 community members through:

- Affordable Rental Properties rehabilitated, preserved, and owned by JAS provide quality, affordable housing to individuals and families. JAS currently owns nearly 600 units and has partnered with Maloney Properties and Wingate to provide the portfolio with professional management.
- Residential Services provides community building and educational activities and referrals to JAS's rental clients, as well as assisting property management in addressing resident issues.
- Home Ownership Opportunities offer housing to first-time homebuyers at below market-rate prices, allowing low-to moderate-income people who want to own a home to remain in Cambridge. JAS develops new condo units and manages the preservation, rehab, and resale of existing units subject to affordable housing restrictions in partnership with the City of Cambridge.
- Home Improvement Program helps preserve, stabilize, and improve properties owned by low- to moderate-income individuals through technical and/or financial assistance.
- Housing Services stabilize housing by offering mediation and conflict resolution, emergency financial assistance, and coordinating support services to prevent eviction and homelessness. JAS professionals also provide advisory services for condominium association finances, management, and compliance.

Provide education, training, career development, and support services to over 350 youth and adults through:

- Biomedical Careers Program enables low-income adults to gain the training needed to enter upon a sustainable career pathway in the life sciences industry.
- YouthBuild enables youth who have dropped out of school to earn a high school credential and gain skills that help them to advance to a post-secondary education or employment.
- Career Connection provides year-round academic support and college and career readiness to at-risk Cambridge high school students.
- TeenWork helps Cambridge high school students develop pre-employment skills (resume writing, interviewing, etc.) and obtain summer and after school jobs in the private sector.
- Summer Youth Enrichment provides Cambridge teens paid summer community service work experience, academic support, financial education, and educational field trips.
- Financial Resources Program will be piloted beginning in 2016 and is slated include financial education workshops, one-on-one financial coaching, free tax preparation, and more financial resources tailored to meet the needs of JAS affordable housing residents and education and training students.