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‘Leader Lab’ seeks some answers

It may not seem possible to solve all of Boston’s biggest problems in one day. But **Jesse Mermell** is going to give it a try.

As president of the left-leaning **Alliance for Business Leadership**, Mermell is hosting a daylong workshop called the Leader Lab at the **Seaport World Trade Center** on Monday in which top executives as well as up-and-comers will gather to hash out some of the city’s biggest issues. Education, transportation, workforce housing, and health-care costs — they’re all on the agenda.

The goal will be to brainstorm and come up with meaningful solutions, ideas that can be passed along to key advocacy groups such as the **Nellie Mae Education Foundation**, **Health Care For All**, and the **Citizens’ Housing and Planning Association**.

Mermell says the lab idea came soon after she started in the job early last year. “I kept hearing from everybody that they wanted something to be engaged [and] roll up their sleeves and help out,” she says.

The list of heavy hitters scheduled to attend includes people from most of Boston’s major sectors: **Phil Edmundson** of insurance brokerage **Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.**; the **New England Venture Capital Association’s Jody Rose**; **Vertex Pharmaceuticals** founder **Joshua Boger**; **Greg Bialecki** of real estate developer **Redgate**; and **Dancing Deer Baking Co.** founder **Trish Karter**.

Each of the roughly 200 participants — a mix of Alliance members and non-members — will pick two issues to focus on. Working groups will be established to continue the dialogue during the next year.

“If you’re the person that yells at the Boston Globe in the morning the way I yell at the Red Sox that they should put me in and let me pitch, this is the event for you,” Mermell says.

— JON CHESTO

