

THE MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Nineteenth Annual
Commonwealth
Heroines of Massachusetts

JUNE 22, 2022

Honoring the Commonwealth Heroines Class of 2022



The MCSW is an independent state agency that was legislatively created in 1998 to advance women of the Commonwealth to full equality in all areas of life and to promote their rights and opportunities. The Commission provides a voice for Massachusetts women and is comprised of 19 members who are appointed by the Governor, Senate President, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Caucus of Women Legislators.

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Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women

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www.mass.gov/women

Greetings,

It is an honor for us to identify extraordinary women from across the Commonwealth.

We would like to thank our many legislative partners who have recommended women within their district who perform unheralded acts daily that make our homes, our neighborhoods, cities and towns better places to live. These acts of public leadership and volunteerism help advance the status of women and girls in Massachusetts in ways big and small, and the collective effort is meaningful.

The Commonwealth Heroines of 2022 are truly the ones who have kept the community together when we needed it the most. They may not always make the news, but they most assuredly make a difference.

You have been selected because you use your time, talent, spirit, and enthusiasm to enrich the lives of others. Again, congratulations and thank you for all your special efforts to make the Commonwealth a better place to live and work.

As you read through stories celebrating your fellow community members, we know that all that is happening in our Commonwealth every day will move you. While we understand that many of you may have wanted to celebrate in person but could not be here with us, we encourage you to connect with each other online with the hash tag #CHeroines2022 to congratulate one another and foster that same community that is cultivated every year at the Commonwealth Heroines celebration.

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women

***“They don’t always make the news,
but they truly make the difference.”***

**Fatima Ali-Salaam
Dawn Anderson
MacKenzie Atwood
Allison Baker
Heather Bialecki- Canning
Dyan Blewett
Christine Bongiorno
Jeanine Calabria
Kate Cardoso
Lynn Carlson
Carol Casey
Susan Chalifoux Zephir
Sarah Cloud
Mary Cole
Chief Jen Collins Brown
Alexi Conine
Aimee Coolidge
Kathi Cotugno
Rebecca Crawford
Carmela Dalton
Lisa Daoust
Matzaris Del Valle
Janet DiLeo Wade
Barbara Dominic, LICSW
Megan Driscoll Greenstein
Marybeth Duffy
Linda Dunlavy
Cynthia Espinosa-Marrero
Irene Fernandes
Luisa Fernandez
Deena Ferrara
Michele Fronk Schuckel
Lillian Fournier
Levenia Furusa Mavingire
Jennelle Gadowski
Masika Gadson
Erin Gaffen
Donna Gill
Yvonne Gittens
Nina Goodick
Kelly Grant
Michelle Guzman
Kim Hanton
Wendy Heiger-Bernays
Mary Jenewin-Caplin
Diana Jeong
Ana Jewell
Marcia Johnson**

**Denise R. Jordan
Melissa Keefe
Jo-Ann Keegan
Donna Kivlin
Jeanne Kjellman
Carole Krauss Mullen
Kim Lalli
Cyndi Lavin
Donna Lawson
Mary E Leach
Katie Leavitt Sutton
Rachel Lee
Deb Leonczyk
Joan Levesque Arguin
Michelle Loglisci
Hadley Luddy
Maribeth Lynch
Roberta Lynch
Patti Machado
Maryellen Maguire-Eisen
Marcia Manong
Ann McGonigle Santos
Joanne McKenna
Kenann McKenzie-DeFranza
Betsy Merry
Sandy Middleton
Cathy Miles
Chanie Minkowitz
Carol Mori
Sarah Moser
Lisa Nemeth
Marleen Nienhuis
Nicole Obi
Tamika Olszewski
Arlene Omosofunmi
Alison Page
Margaret “Peg” Page
Adriana Paz
Kathleen Pease
Jane Piercy
Lisa Piscatelli
Tracy Priestner
Maureen Reilly Meagher
Suzanne Remington
Patricia Romney
Mary Jo Rossetti
Cynthia Roy
Clare Ryan LaMattina**

**Susan Salamoff
Mechilia Salazar
Marlene Santos
Julia Silverio
Annette Simmons
Danielle Smida
Anne Marie Stronach
Susan Swanson
Jocelyn Tager
Pam Tarallo
Nancy Thomas
Ann Toland
Helena Tonge
Tammy Turner
Paulette Van der Kloot
Fredericka Veikley
Susan Verdicchio
Toy Vongpheth
Mary Waldron
Lisa Welch
Brett Westbrook, MSW
Carolyn Wynn
Fran Yuan**

THE HEROINES

2022



Fatima Ali-Salaam , Boston

Recommended by Sen. Nick Collins

Fatima is the Inaugural and Current Chair of the Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council. Fatima is a leader in her community, and one of the most effective and diligent advocates for transportation and greater environmental equity throughout the City. But most importantly, Fatima doesn't just talk the talk; she walks the walk every weekend, leading community walks up and down Blue Hill Ave. to keep residents knowledgeable and engaged in their communities as well. Her unwavering work to ensure transportation equity for entire communities, combined with her fierce dedication towards a greener Boston make her an inspiration to those in service, and a passionate, dedicated, and conscientious mentor.



Dawn Anderson, Grafton

Recommended by Rep. David Muradian

Dawn was elected to the position of Town Moderator in 2021 and is the first woman to be elected to the position in Grafton's history. Dawn worked closely with the Town during the various Town Meetings held since being elected, including an outdoor meeting held in June during the height of the pandemic. This meeting is noteworthy in particular as it was extremely windy; in fact the tent used to shelter the moderator at one point blew off stage! Further, the meeting involved two different spaces with an in-remote location for residents who needed to stay cool and out of the sun. Dawn was instrumental in ensuring that the meeting layout was in compliance with COVID best practices and she worked diligently with other Town Officials to keep people safe.



Mackenzie Atwood, Franklin

Recommended by Sen. Becca Rausch

Mackenzie, Franklin High School Senior and local advocate against bullying and identity-based discrimination made international headlines in October 2021 after being harassed by an audience member over her sexual identity during a public school committee meeting. After bravely standing up for herself in the forum, MacKenzie used her platform to speak up for LGBTQ+ protections and against bullying, and many community members joined in her advocacy. MacKenzie also is the FHS Class of 2022 Treasurer, a member of the school's Theater Company, and an FHS Peer Leader. She will be pursuing post-secondary education at Columbia College Chicago in the fall for Acting and Cinema and Television studies.



Allison Baker, South Boston

Recommended by Rep. David Biele

Allison Baker has a proven track record of bettering the lives of children and families throughout South Boston. She makes a difference every day as a paraprofessional for students with autism at Perkins Elementary School and is a program leader with the South Boston Boys and Girls Club and the Tierney Learning Center. Allison also supports youth development through sports and athletics, having mentored countless local youth as a coach for the Gate of Heaven CYO youth basketball program for the past thirteen years. In addition to her professional and volunteer efforts, Allison founded a successful non-profit program called Kickoff for Kids that has raised over \$40,000 to support local youth and their families during the holidays.



Heather Bialecki-Canning, Athol

Recommended by Sen. Joanne Comerford, Sen. Anne Gobi, Rep. Susannah Whipps

Heather is Executive Director for the North Quabbin Community Coalition (NQCC), an organization formed in 1984 for the purpose of improving the quality of life of residents of the North Quabbin region. Those who know her can attest that “improving” doesn’t do justice to what Heather has accomplished and her vision for the region. Heather coordinates and facilitates all NQCC related meetings, including five task forces. Current projects include the Children’s Health and Wellness System of Care, North Quabbin Recovery Center, PART Task Force (Prevention, Addiction, Recover, and Treatment), as well as the very active NQCC governing bodies.



Dyan Blewett, Somerville

Recommended by Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven

For the past ten years, Dyan has contributed her talents and skills to serving the Somerville Museum as Treasurer and member of the Board of Trustees. Dyan oversees the Museum’s accounts, runs payroll, pays Museum bills, compiles materials for the IRS and nonprofit statements, oversees grant and donor income and disbursements, tracks all sales of books, Museum apparel and more, as the Museum requires. Dyan is also a Massachusetts Master Gardener and a founding member of the Somerville Garden Club, organizing the plant sale and helping improve gardens around the city for the benefit of all. She served as the Treasurer of the Somerville Garden Club from 1994 to 2008. She served as Treasurer of Historic Somerville from 2011 to 2020 and continues to manage these funds for the Somerville Museum. Dyan does all this as a volunteer while managing a demanding full-time job.



Christine Bongiorno, Arlington

Recommended by Sen. Cindy Friedman

Christine Bongiorno started her career as the Tobacco Compliance Director for the Town of Arlington in 2000. She then became the Health Compliance Officer in 2001. In 2003, she was the Director of Public Health. She has been in her current role as Director of Health and Human Services since 2006. Christine has dedicated her career to Arlington’s most vulnerable and continue to lead the town through the ongoing pandemic.



Jeanine Calabria, Concord

Recommended by Rep. Tami Gouveia

Jeanine is the Executive Director of Open Table, Inc., a 33-year-old organization which aims to end hunger and food insecurity in 17 communities in the greater Concord area. Through her leadership, a mobile delivery program, a drive-through, and an online option were developed throughout the pandemic to meet the food and nutrition access needs of area residents. Jeanine has led the transformation of the organization to grow vastly in size. In 2017, Jeanine successfully co-lead a capital campaign leading to the purchase of a permanent, welcoming, and vibrant facility in Maynard. Under Jeanine’s leadership, Open Table served over 47,000 meals this past year and has recently secured culturally appropriate food and goods to support Afghan refugees. Jeanine is currently writing a memoir cookbook that she hopes to have published soon.



Kate Cardoso, Florence

Recommended by Rep. Lindsay Sadosa

Kate is the Manna Community Kitchen Board President - helping Manna transition from an organization that serves amazing, nutritious, beautiful food with love and respect to those in need to one that still serves the same wonderful meals but also provides holistic support for the homeless community in the Northampton area. She has played a role in designing and organizing the Resilience Hub, opening a living room-like space for people to stay safe and warm during the day, and creating The Kind Cafe. She excels at connecting people so that more and more people are at the table. With all of this, Kate also works to inspire the next generation of women leaders by coaching Girls on the Run. If there is a good cause in the community, Kate is generally involved, working hard to bring her message of "love wins" to everything she does.



Lynn Carlson, South Dennis

Recommended by Rep. Timothy Whelan

Lynn is Chairperson of the Substance Use Disorder Advisory Committee (SUDAC) in the Town of Dennis and works for the Dennis Police Department as a clinician specializing in substance use disorder. She's made an immediate impact on the community by making referrals, conducting follow-ups, and outreach with DPD Officers who specialize in Mental Health, working to reduce stigma, and making connections with services throughout Cape Cod. Retiring to Dennis almost 3 years ago has given Lynn the opportunity to continue to advocate for services for individuals with substance use disorder, including working at Gosnold Treatment Center as a per diem social worker in their partial hospital program.



Carol Casey, Amesbury

Recommended by Sen. Diana DiZoglio

Carol serves the great people of the City of Amesbury as Outreach Coordinator for the Amesbury Lions Club. This is a new position that was created to promote outreach to our neighbors and friends who may be experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation during these challenging times. A phone call from someone who cares can be just the thing someone needs. Carol, an immensely compassionate person with a calm voice and listening ear, is the perfect person for this role. Over the month of January alone, she logged nearly 50 calls to fellow Amesbury residents – some long, some short, but all impactful. Carol also volunteers through Holy Family Parish and the Council on Aging.



Susan Chalifoux Zephir, Leominster

Recommended by Rep. Natalie Higgins

Sue has served as the Executive Director of Ginny's Helping Hand, which hosts Leominster's largest food pantry. She works with her team to provide temporary shelter, with the goal of setting up permanent housing situations, provide fuel assistance to those in need, and supply furniture, clothing and other necessities of life. She has served on the Leominster City Council since 2010 and serves on the Leominster Public Library Board of Trustees. Sue helped inspire minds young and old while working for 21 years at the WGBH Educational Foundation as a Production and Business Manager. Leominster is incredibly fortunate for Sue's leadership and commitment to our community.



Sarah Cloud, Pembroke

Recommended by Sen. Susan Moran

Sarah is the director of Social Work at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Plymouth. During a time of heightened need and attention on behavioral health she has been a leader in advocating for patients and healthy work environments. She has dedicated her career to healthcare reform initiatives in behavioral health and community support programs; structured outpatient addiction and suicide prevention programs and co-responding jail diversion programs. Sarah is also a member of the Plymouth County Outreach (PCO), acts as co-chair of the Plymouth County Drug Use Task Force medical subcommittee, Vice-President of PCO Hope, and serves on the Boards of Department of Mental Health, Taking People Places and Boston Bulldogs Running Club. She also the author of the Mama Paca Children Book series, which helps children understand and cope with the loss of a parent to the opioid epidemic. Sarah is tireless in her work supporting those affected by substance use disorder and in reducing stigma around the disease of addiction.



Mary Cole, East Boston

Recommended by Rep. Adrian Madaro

Mary is a very active member in our community. She is a board member of the Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association and the Piers Park Sailing Center. During the pandemic, Mary worked as a census worker to help our neighbors get counted, and she was a member of a Boston Area Mask Initiative. She helped sew hundreds of masks for people in need at the beginning of the pandemic when masks were scarce. Mary is an essential part of our community and we are grateful for her dedication to East Boston.



Chief Jen Collins Brown, Topsfield

Recommended by Rep. Jamie Zahlaway Belsito

Chief Collins Brown is one of ONLY two female fire chiefs in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. She is calm, cool headed, focused and leads her team by example. She has taken on COVID in our community, which ravaged Masconomet Rehab in the beginning of the pandemic, with compassion and composure. She took advantage of every learning opportunity, every possibility of taking care of our seniors, getting shots in arms when available and taking care of EVERY SINGLE household in Topsfield. From physical to mental, Chief Collins is there with a steady hand. She leads with knowledge and know how that only a few in this lifetime would have when it comes to community, health and wellness and protection.



Alexi Conine, Boston

Recommended by Rep. Jay Livingstone

Alexi Conine has served as an outstanding, active, and engaged member of the Back Bay community, particularly focused on improving outdoor recreational space. She currently serves as the Board Chair of the Esplanade Association and, through that role, has played an instrumental role in bringing significant improvements to the parks and playgrounds along the Charles River. She also serves as the President of the Conine Foundation where she works to improve bicycle networks throughout Greater Boston. Previously, she served as the President of the Friends of Titus Park. Her efforts have made possible substantial improvements for outdoor recreation in her community and surrounding communities.



Aimee Coolidge, Arlington

Recommended by Rep. Aaron Michlewitz

Aimee has been a longtime advocate for those experiencing homelessness in the City of Boston. As Vice President for Community and Government Relations at Pine Street Inn, Aimee has provided leadership in Boston for many years, and I recognize that this accomplishments would not be possible without a considerable investment of her time, hard work and dedication. Aimee's tireless efforts in advocating for permanent housing for the homeless population is truly heartwarming and an inspiration to all of us in the community.



Kathi Cotugno, Montgomery

Recommended by Sen. John Velis

Kathi is the director of the Coalition for Outreach, Recovery and Education (C.O.R.E.) for Greater Westfield. Kathi does tremendous work in the area of substance use prevention and intervention in our local youth and adults. As a mother who lost her own son to overdose, she continues to advocate for and implement effective substance abuse and overdose mitigation. For example, in 2021 Kathi was instrumental in efforts to bring a 'harm reduction van' to Westfield each month. This service allows those with substance use to receive health care which includes to exchange used syringes for new ones, which reduces health risks to those suffering from addiction.



Rebecca Crawford, Framingham

Recommended by Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis "If I could choose one person to be a part of every decision

making process, no matter the topic, it would be Rebecca." works at the Summit Montessori School as the Director of Advancement, running fundraising and admissions, and working with colleagues to shepherd over 100 students through this pandemic. She also serves as the Director of Religious Exploration at First Parish in Framingham, spearheading the congregation's youth groups and religious programming. During the pandemic, Rebecca partnered with First Parish in Wayland to unite two youth groups together and share resources. She can also be seen regularly around the community volunteering with boy and girl scout programs, teaching leadership skills, youth empowerment, and outdoor enrichment.



Carmela Dalton, Lynnfield

Recommended by Rep. Bradley H. Jones

As the President of the Think of Michael Foundation, helping families and individuals battle substance abuse. After losing their son, Michael, to an overdose in 2018, Mrs. Dalton and her husband, Richard, launched this foundation with the goal of assisting individuals to achieve the best success in their sobriety. The foundation offers scholarships to people who have completed clinical stabilization treatment and then require housing assistance in a safe and supportive environment with others going through the same experience, an important beginning for many people in early recovery. Recently, the Think of Michael Foundation donated \$10,000 to the Gavin Foundation's Covid-19 Emergency Response Rent Relief Program. The foundation was also named a 2020 Top Rated Nonprofit. Her commitment is truly commendable.



Lisa Daoust, Spencer

Recommended by Rep. Donnie Berthiaume

Lisa Daoust worked tirelessly for The Town of Spencer and its residents during the Covid-19 pandemic. She maintained the highest degree of professionalism along with compassion when dealing with the concerns of the constituents that reached out to her. She managed the nearly impossible task of keeping the lines of communication open between all town and school district departments. Lisa was one of the very few town hall employees within The Town of Spencer to perform her job in person during the pandemic while still attending



Matzaris Del Valle, Hyde Park/ Boston

Recommended by Rep. Rob Consalvo

Matty volunteered in the Promotion Committee and Design Committee by planting flowers in April, assisting with the annual fundraiser gala in September, and helping with wreath distribution in November. Matty went from an Advisory Board Member to a full-fledged board member in 2019, and is now a part of the Executive Committee and treasurer. Matty has spent countless hours helping behind the scenes with our local Spanish speaking businesses serving as an advisor and a translator. Currently, Matty is also a member of the Hyde Park Central River Neighborhood Group (HPCRNG). She was able to secure a "Block Party" grant from the City of Boston and hosted a block party in her part of the neighborhood. She is also the author of the newsletter for the HPCRNG and attends many community meetings.



Janet DiLeo Wade, Kingston

Recommended by Rep. Kathleen LaNatra

Dr. Janet Wade has devoted her nursing career to the health and wellness of people within her community and around the world. She is a registered nurse with a Doctorate in Nursing Practice from UMASS-Amherst. She has worked internationally, nationally and regionally with diverse multi-cultural and socio-economic groups in a variety of settings, including hospitals, community centers, clinics and corporate health. Janet currently serves on the Town of Kingston Board of Health; is an adjunct clinical nursing professor with MGH Institute of Health Professions; and is the producer and host of PAC-TV's "Healthy Kingston", a monthly series that explores timely community health and wellness issues. She currently is a volunteer nurse at Plymouth Area Coalition for the Homeless and has participated in numerous COVID-19 vaccination clinics during the pandemic. Janet has used her talents, education and experience to the benefit of many.



Barbara Dominic, LICSW, Brewster

Recommended by Sen. Julian Cyr

Barbara is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW) with extensive experience in private practice, in local and county government agencies, as a hospital social worker, and as a school social worker. Currently, Barbara dedicates her time to improving access to quality behavioral health services for children on the Cape and Islands through her work with the Barnstable County Department of Human Services. As the Children's Behavioral Health Consultant, Barbara is tasked with implementing the recommendations and action plan of the Children's Behavioral Health Work Group, a grass roots effort established to address the challenges youth and families face in obtaining behavioral health care. Through her consistent, thorough, and thoughtful efforts to connect resources, facilitate conversation, and advocate for children and families Barbara plays a vital role in this critically important work for the Cape and Islands



Megan Driscoll Greenstein, Duxbury

Recommended by Rep. Josh Cutler

Megan is a former CEO, advocate for social justice and women's equality, and fiercely bright person. In 2003, Megan founded a recruiting company with the hopes of finding people meaningful work. That company became one of the largest firms on the East Coast, winning awards for its fast growth, culture, and commitment to social justice. Megan won the 2019 Gold Stevie Award for Achievement in Gender Equality and the 2020 Boston Women's Workforce Council's Innovation Award for her commitment and achievement of wage transparency at her firm.

Megan has since gone on to create and advocate for wage transparency legislation to level the playing field for women and people of color in the Commonwealth. Megan is a lead advocate for An Act Relative to Pay Equity, legislation that is currently pending in the State Legislature.

Megan continues her mission to make the workplace fairer for all.



Marybeth Duffy, Waltham

Recommended by Rep. Thomas Stanley

Marybeth is a clinical social worker who has been the director of the Waltham Council on Aging for over fourteen years. Her early life growing up in a four generation household with grandparents and great-grandparents seeded her appreciation and enjoyment of older adults. Her work settings have included a nursing home, medical hospital and inpatient geriatric-psychiatry unit. She has relished the challenges and fulfilling experiences of community work in the senior center setting. There she has had the opportunity to enjoy long-term relationships with many of Waltham's older adults. The past two years during the pandemic have shed a light on the more serious needs of the older residents of Waltham. Her goal is to help older adults live meaningful, healthy and safe lives in the community. Marybeth feels fortunate to work in such a supportive and caring community that values its older population.



Linda Dunlavy, Greenfield

Recommended by Rep. Natalie Blais

Linda has been with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) since 1993, and its Executive Director since 1999. Under Linda's leadership, FRCOG has grown to have over 60 staff members in its twelve programs. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, FRCOG led the region by supporting testing, vaccination, and contact tracing. Linda also sits on a variety of boards and committees including the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, and the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. Additionally, Linda is the Chair of the Rural Policy Advisory Commission and Co-Chair of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies.



Cynthia Espinosa-Marrero, Holyoke

Recommended by Rep. Patricia Duffy

Cynthia has the drive that it takes to step into roles that impact a city like Holyoke. She was recently hired as the new Executive Director of Nueva Esperanza inc. Her passion to always connect with her Puerto Rican culture is exemplified by her engagement through environment and food, which led her to learn the patterns of nature and how we use them in our professional world. In Cynthia's words, "I found a way to be able to translate the nature patterns into the non-profit design, systems and policies to advance the mission, encourage leadership in others and celebrate the victories along the way". Cynthia continues to lead our community by demonstrating the importance of our indigenous roots and culture.



Irene Fernandes, Taunton

Recommended by Rep. Carol Doherty

Irene is a Senior Citizen. Most notable, since 9/11 she has single handedly organized and implemented an annual tribute held in honor of the victims of the 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. The City of Taunton lost two persons in that tragedy. During these 20 years she has also organized a recognition event for the victims and families of the Boston Marathon Tragedy. Irene is also a poet penning many verses over the years in honor of Fire Fighters, Police Officers and Veterans. She adds to her good works raising money for scholarships for our college bound youngsters. Her years of giving are well deserving of this recognition.



Luisa Fernandez, Fitchburg

Recommended by Rep. Michael Kushmerek

Luisa is a hardworking and passionate community leader within Fitchburg. Luisa works with Fitchburg Families First, a program launched during the pandemic to provide food, family necessities, and educational support to people within the Fitchburg Public Schools system. As FPS' family and community engagement coordinator, she engages in the critical work of building a strong relationship between the community and the school system. Luisa came to Fitchburg from Venezuela in 2015, where she and her family started from scratch. Ever since, Luisa has made an immense impact on the lives of those around her, both students and families. Her endless advocacy and work has greatly benefited the lives and learning of students within the FPS system.



Deena Ferrara, Acton

Recommended by Sen. James Eldridge

Deena is an incredible community advocate, who has been active in a wide variety of civic and social justice organizations for over 40 years in Acton. Recently, she has been a leader as a member of the Na'aseh Social Action Committee of Congregation Beth Elohim that helped raise over \$40,000 to host an Afghan family evacuated from Afghanistan last year, and provides weekly support to the family. Deena has also been a leader with Mothers Out Front Acton which recently organized a Race for Clean Heat Rally to advocate for utility companies to make the transition to 100% clean energy. Of the many Acton civic groups that Deena is a part of, she is always ready to lend a helping hand, reflecting her kindness, her compassion for people struggling in life, and her commitment to social justice.



Lillian Fournier, Clinton

Recommended by Rep. Meghan Kilcoyne

For decades the Clinton Tribute Road Race has been a tradition in the Town which the local paper, "The Item", was in charge of. Unfortunately the paper had to stop with the tradition. Thankfully, the Clinton Gaels Athletics Booster Club, led by Lillian Fournier, brought the tradition back! Not only is this cherished tradition saved in the Town of Clinton, the booster club has been able to raise thousands of dollars for the young athletes in the Town. Lillian Fournier has been a pillar of change for the community of Clinton.



Michele Fronk Schuckel, Weston

Recommended by Rep. Alice Peisch

Michele is a Registered Nurse and businesswoman who left private sector work to lead Weston's efforts in fighting the spread of the Coronavirus. As the COVID-19 Response Manager, in support of the whole community, she works with particular focus on providing equitable resources for the most vulnerable populations. She also championed school-based COVID-19 testing across Massachusetts, working with other parent scientists as part of a data-driven volunteer collaborative to advocate for in-person learning at all levels, made safer with robust COVID-19 testing programs and layered measures to stop the spread of SARS-CoV-2. These efforts continue to be key in keeping parents, particularly working mothers, in the workplace. Michele also works as a wellness nurse educator and health coach and helps clients improve their overall wellbeing with particular attention to physical and mental health parity. Michele has made an immeasurable impact on the lives of her neighbors and friends.



Levenia Furusa Mavingire, Lowell

Recommended by Rep. Thomas A. Golden

Levenia Furusa Mavingire is from Zimbabwe Africa. She is the Founder and Executive Director of Dwelling House Of Hope Inc a non-profit located in Lowell, MA, with a mission of compassionately alleviating poverty among people in need. She founded the organization from the basement of her house, after witnessing the challenge of food insecurity faced by single parents, low income, immigrants, and refugee population in her community. Levenia's efforts not only support the community but build the community. She is an example of a true community leader, a doer, and a problem solver. Throughout these years she has passionately and compassionately gone above and beyond to serve the communities and show the true representation of what humanity should stand for. Over the years, she has received numerous awards for her endeavors, and she looks forward to empowering and giving more to those who are in need and making a difference in the community.



Jennelle Gadowski, Tisbury

Recommended by Rep. Dylan Fernandes

Through her community organizing and activism, Jennelle aims to educate and empower the public, and is often a panelist, moderator or organizer of events and rallies. As Chair of the NAACP Martha's Vineyard Branch LGBTQ+ committee, Jennelle strives to strengthen diversity, equity and inclusion efforts on Martha's Vineyard. Last June and this year, she encouraged all select boards on Martha's Vineyard to fly the Progress Pride flag at prominent flagpoles within each town during Pride Month. Jennelle is a volunteer for the Communication Ambassador Partnership, an organization that bridges the communication barriers with non-English speaking islanders. She is also a member of the Young Activists for Social Justice MV, MV Black Lives Matter, the MV League of Women Voters Climate Committee and We Stand Together, Estamos Todos Juntos, a community organizing group dedicated to civic engagement.



Masika Gadson, Boston

Recommended by Rep. Liz Miranda

Masika Gadson is a Boston community leader, advocate and innovator, Masika Gadson has been supporting resilience and healing for children and families for over 20 years. She currently works as a Violence Intervention Specialist and Community Outreach and Training Supervisor at the Violence Intervention and Advocacy Program (VIAP) at Boston Medical Center, where she provides comprehensive support to survivors of community violence and their families. She works with community members and organizations to ensure coordination of care. Masika serves as a lead team member for the Boston Trauma Response Team and actively contributes to several city-wide safety task forces. Masika is a member of the Training Subcommittee at Boston Public Health Commission. Masika serves on the Community Advisory Council for the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, and on the Advisory Board of The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (The HAVI), a national organization that addresses violence as an public health issue.



Erin Gaffen, Reading

Recommended by Rep. Richard Haggerty

Erin co-chaired the "Yes For Reading" campaign in town which successfully advocated for additional financial resources for town services. The added funds helped the town retain elementary, middle, and high school teachers; support athletic programs; add police officers and firefighters; increase library funding; and provide more support for elder services and the Department of Public Works.

As a member for the past two years of the School Committee, Erin has successfully navigated some of the most difficult decisions facing any local elected official in modern times. She has served her community with honor and distinction.



Donna Gill, Tewksbury

Recommended by Rep. Tram Nguyen

Donna has been a shining light in Tewksbury for over 30 years. She began working for the town in 1986 in the Treasurer's Office, and as town offices began using computers, she helped Tewksbury become automated, installing computers and training employees. She then worked in the Auditor's Office, and was appointed as the Town Accountant in 2002, where she served until she retired in 2011. Retirement did not stop Donna from contributing her time and talent to the town. Donna is a lifetime member of the Friends of the Tewksbury Public Library, and serves on the Executive Board. She was instrumental in creating and editing the library's Community Cookbook last year, which went into 2 printings. Donna is a "get things done" person who is always willing to pitch in. She makes Tewksbury a wonderful place to live. & Tai Chi Academies in Malden and Quincy.



Yvonne Gittens, Cambridge

Recommended by Rep. Marjorie Decker

Yvonne served on the Board of Directors of the Cambridge Community Center for over 30 years. She was also a member of the first committee to work on Cambridge's African American Heritage Trail Project. Upon retirement from MIT, she continues to stay busy giving back to her community. She currently serves as a member of the Sister to Sister Community Conversations Committee, holding workshops on issues impacting women of color. In addition to being a substitute Lead Teacher, Ms. G especially loves working with the pre-teen girls. She teaches them cooking and how to make lip balm and body scrub, among many other things. Most importantly, she invites women of color in our community to come and talk to the girls about their careers and other important life lessons.



Nina Goodick, Gloucester

Recommended by Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante

As a member of the board of trustees of the Cape Ann Museum and daughter of a fishing family, Nina is a champion for Cape Ann's artistic and maritime traditions. She spearheaded the Museum's involvement with the Grace Center to serve lunch twice a month to residents who are experiencing food insecurity and homelessness. Using her skill as an artist, Nina supports local causes such as the Open Door Food Pantry, to which she donates hand-crafted bowls to be auctioned in support of their annual "Empty Bowl" fundraiser. Nina is also a trustee of Awesome Gloucester, which supports awesome projects related to innovation in maritime industry and economy, preservation of maritime heritage and culture, and community togetherness and appreciation.



Kelly Grant, Bellingham

Recommended by Rep. Michael Soter

Kelly started her career as a Senior Advisor and Elder Care Manager before deciding to become a paraprofessional in various school districts. Kelly has immersed herself in Bellingham through service on the Stall Brook Elementary School PTO, Finance Committee, Capital Improvements Committee, Master Plan Implementation Committee, and Selectboard. While Kelly holds many titles, it is her involvement beyond her regular duties that sets her apart. Kelly supports every level of the sense of community in Bellingham. By taking charge of the Bellingham Days Celebration in August, she was successful in bringing residents together during the pandemic when it was needed most. From participating in events at the Bellingham Senior Center to supporting local youth sports, Kelly has made herself a resource to all in town. It is because of Kelly's commitment to the town that it is a more welcoming and better place to live.



Michelle Guzman, Lynn

Recommended by Rep. Daniel Cahill

Michelle is the Coordinator of the Lynn Community Enrichment Program (LCEP). LCEP was founded in conjunction between the New Lynn Coalition, a coalition of community, faith and labor organizations, and the Lynn Public Schools to offer classes that include but are not limited to computer applications in English and Spanish, conversational Spanish, basic conversation to English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), public speaking, yoga, cake decoration and more. The LCEP is a tremendous asset to the City of Lynn and it is because of the hard work of leaders, like Michelle. A fierce advocate of issues that affect our community, Michelle has consistently risen to the occasion of making the City of Lynn a better place to live for all of its residents, including doing walking tours to embrace Lynn's history and heritage for current and future generations. The city is better today because of her work.



Kim Hanton, Revere

Recommended by Rep. Jessica Giannino

Kim has given 34 years of leadership, guidance, and vision to NSMHA's Addictions Division while serving as the Director of Addiction Services. Kim changed the course by growing the number of services and programs provided. She also advanced outreach by being involved with both the STEPRox Recovery Support Center and the second RSC – Recovery on the Harbor. The Hanton Recovery House in Chelsea, MA was named in her honor. Before retiring from NSMHA, Kim concurrently served as the City of Revere's Chief of Health and Human Services and City COVID-19 Response Team leader. Currently, Kim works in the Mayor's Office as his Chief of Staff. From day one of the pandemic, Kim served as the leader of Revere's COVID Emergency Response Team. Frankly, without Kim's guidance and leadership, the Revere Emergency Response Team would not exist.



Wendy Heiger-Bernays, Lexington

Recommended by Rep. Michelle Ciccolo

Wendy currently serves as Chair of the Lexington Board of Health, as well as a faculty member of the Department of Environmental Health at the Boston University School of Public Health. She also serves on technical advisory committees for toxicological and environmental health issues at both the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the US Environmental Protection Agency. She is an expert in molecular toxicology that directly informs her work assessing and reducing environmental pollution for communities, including Lexington. As part of the Research Translation Core of the Boston University Superfund Research Program, she works with regulatory environmental and health organizations to inform policy and practice. Currently, Wendy's work ranges from understanding exposure to flame retardant chemicals, the soil quality of municipal compost, the impact of on-shore large wind-turbines, and more.



Mary Jenewin-Caplin, East Longmeadow

Recommended by Rep. Brian Ashe

Mary Jenewin-Caplin, East Longmeadow Recommended by Rep. Brian Ashe After working for 45 years with non-profits, government and higher education, Mary Jenewin-Caplin currently serves in a number of local volunteer positions. The Chair Volleyball Coordinator at the senior center in East Longmeadow, she has engaged other community members; legislators, town officials, business people, students, etc. Mary assists at special events; April 1st lunch humor, virgin Margaritas for Cinco de Mayo, lottery tickets for prospects at the volunteer fair, etc. As a member of the town Cultural Council; she is participating in production of the first Town Art Show. She also serves on the board of Brownstone Gardens Housing, as an "older adult" representative on the Western Mass ElderCare Conference and East Longmeadow Republican Town Committee Chair.



Diana Jeong, Malden

Recommended by Rep. Steven Ultrino

A lifelong resident of Malden, Diana is a leader who has dedicated her time and enthusiasm to enrich the lives of the Malden community. After retiring from her position as Finance Director for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, she has devoted her time to various volunteer organizations such as the YWCA Malden, Urban Media Arts, Malden Reads, and Melrose Wakefield Healthcare. She has co-founded Asian-based non-profit organizations, Asian Spectrum, and the Greater Malden Asian American Community Coalition (GMAACC). She is currently GMAACC's Vice President. Diana has touched many lives in the areas of arts, health, housing, finance, public cable access, and human rights.



Ana Jewell, Springfield

Recommended by Sen. Adam Gomez

Ana is a Springfield resident who volunteers her free time as the coordinator of Just Love, an organization committed to supporting those in need, especially within the homeless community. Through her organization, Ana has organized multiple "Community Caravan" pop-up events in areas with high concentrations of individuals experiencing homelessness to provide, food and supplies while connecting those in attendance with community resources. During the COVID-19 pandemic Just Love organized a COVID-19 vaccination event for individuals experiencing homelessness. In addition, she has organized multiple "Stuff the Purse" events aimed at providing feminine hygiene products specifically to women experiencing homelessness. Along with her partner, Kelly Dobbins, owner of Iona's Kitchen, Ana also puts together a free annual Thanksgiving Dinner for individuals in need of food and fellowship during the holiday.



Marcia Johnson, Newton

Recommended by Sen. Cynthia Creem

Motivated by personal experience, Marcia has advocated to improve access to affordable housing in Newton. From 2000-2016, Marcia was a member of the Board of Alderman (City Council). As Chair of the Zoning & Planning Committee, she worked to create the Mixed-Use 4 district with the goal of "expand[ing] the diversity of housing options available in the City." Marcia is also the President of the League of Women Voters of Newton. She recently retired after more than 20 years from her position as a human resources professional in the bio-pharmaceutical industry, where she focused on organizational and leadership development. Marcia is Clerk of the CAN-DO Board of Directors and is an active member of the Pathway to Possible (P2P) Best Buddies Program, with her pen-pal Faith. .



Denise R. Jordan, Springfield

Recommended by Rep. Angelo Puppolo

In 2008, Denise became the City of Springfield's first Black Chief of Staff and the longest person to occupy that position. Most recently, Denise was selected to serve as the Executive Director of the Springfield Housing Authority, the third largest public housing authority in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, was named as one of Business West's 2018 Women of Impact and was selected as American International College's 2019 Commencement Speaker, where she was also awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree in recognition of her community contributions at the state and national levels.



Melissa Keefe (East Falmouth)

Recommended by State Rep. David T. Vieira

Melissa lives in East Falmouth with her husband Brian, daughter Molly, and son Joey. Melissa has been a Town Meeting Member since 2015 and a community volunteer for many years. She serves as an elected member of the Falmouth Public School Committee, serves as Committee Secretary. Melissa is also an elected Town Meeting Member representing Precinct 4. When not working as a registered nurse at Cape Cod Hospital's Post Anesthesia Care Unit, she volunteers her time with youth as a member of Falmouth VIPS - Volunteers in Public Schools. She is an active member of the Morse Pond School and Lawrence School PTOs. Melissa was co-director of the June Jog event from 2018 to 2021. She is also an active member of the East Falmouth Village Association and the Waquoit Bay Yacht Club.



Jo-Ann Keegan, Lowell

Recommended by Rep. Rady Mom

Having worked for 34 years as the Public Health Nursing Advisor for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in the Bureau of Communicable Disease Control, Jo-Ann was chosen to help a city without a health director during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Jo-Ann nobly and graciously came out of retirement twice to serve as Interim Lowell Health Director. She courageously led Lowell's pandemic relief efforts as the COVID-19 Incident Commander and was also charged with the vital task of coordinating the city's vaccine distribution. from day one to organize an effective pandemic response. With her deep knowledge of Lowell's diverse cultural and social and economic communities coupled with her expertise in leadership, Lowell had one of the highest vaccination rates. Her guidance kept residents healthy, businesses operating, and students in school and learning. Lowell is forever grateful to Jo-Ann for her valiant work.



Donna Kivlin, Littleton

Recommended by Rep. James Arciero

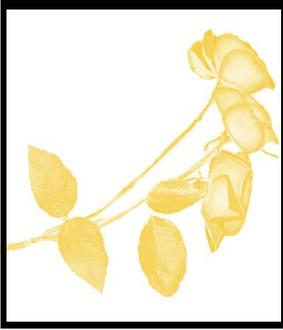
Donna is Director of the Pegasus House, an addiction treatment center in Lawrence that helps young female addicts, aged from 18 to 25, get the treatment and resources they need. Selfless and humble, Donna is known for her steady work ethic as well as her compassion and mentorship for women that graduate from the program. From collecting donations, to constructing the daily operations of the program to redoing the interior design of the program center, Donna is passionate and has had an enormous impact on women in the Merrimack Valley during the pandemic.



Jeanne Kjellman, Lakeville

Recommended by Rep. Norman Orrall

Jeanne is an active and passionate community volunteer in the Middleborough and Lakeville communities and is known as one of the friendliest people you'll ever meet. She consistently puts others first and is someone who is ready to help whenever or wherever she is needed. Jeanne is a talented inspirational speaker and has made strong efforts to help women of all ages support other women. She helped to found the Beacon Homeschool Group over ten years ago which has a regional impact on educational opportunities for children. Her desire to help others extends beyond this country through various programs and her giving heart makes Middleborough and Lakeville a better place to live.



Carole Krauss Mullen, Hopedale

Recommended by Rep. Brian Murray

Carole has served as Director of the Hopedale Council on Aging for 26 years. She has initiated and coordinated a number of programs to benefit Hopedale seniors, such as the Senior Tax Credit Volunteer Work Program; "Grand friends" at The Bright Beginnings Center pre-school and the annual Veteran's Day breakfast and ceremony. She also oversees the town's food service and fuel assistance programs, as well as collaborates with other towns and departments for transportation for seniors. Currently, she is working with Riverside Community Care to offer anxiety management therapy sessions to seniors. During the pandemic, Carole personally worked to obtain appointments, navigate the booking process and ensure that seniors were vaccinated. She and her small staff made sure that every senior who needed assistance was supported.



Kim Lalli, Maynard

Recommended by Rep. Kate Hogan

Kim is known for her caring, giving, helpful - yet humble and selfless - nature. She is drawn to engaging with, and contributing to, the betterment of her community and those around her. As an adult she has served enthusiastically and tirelessly in several local and national organizations, helping people in need and showing others how to get involved. Whether it's with the Girl Scouts, Relay for Life, the Emblem Club, or Hometown Heroes, Kim jumps in with both feet as a volunteer, coordinator, and leader to serve, organize, fundraise, and so much more. She has touched hundreds of lives in and around Maynard and made her community better and stronger.



Cyndi Lavin, Ayer

Recommended by Rep. Danilo Sena

Cyndi has worked diligently as Director of Stone Soup Kitchen Ministries, a 501(c)3 located in Ayer's Living Water Fellowship that hosts potluck dinners and a food pantry, to supply food to members of the community. In addition, Stone Soup Kitchen Ministries under Cyndi's leadership has provided a variety of community-building activities, including an open support group, hair cuts, Craft Gathering, literacy tutoring, and even an indoor place for guests in need to sleep and shower during the cold winter months. Cyndi has worked closely with civic organizations, churches, the police station, the local grocery store, and other businesses in order to "put food on the tables" of our neighbors. Cyndi's innovative, dedicated work to support those in need before and during the pandemic has been essential to the well-being of the community.



Donna Lawson, Marstons Mills

Recommended by Rep. Steven Xiarhos

Donna had been President of the Marston's Mills Village Association for 18 years and the Vice President of the Long Pond Farms Association for over 20 years.

She has led and contributed to endless projects within the community, including restoring and maintaining the local and historical Burgess House. She led the project upgrading Marston's Mills' Main Street and was the point person for all business owners and town officials, while also most recently placing flags at a local cemetery and signage on the First Responders Appreciation Rotary.

For the Long Pond Farms Association, Donna handles the weekly water testing and signage at the beach, while also organizes and assists gardeners in their community garden where she brings hundreds of bouquets to local nursing homes and assisted living facilities every week, on her own accord.

Donna's devotion to her community is very appreciated.



Mary E. Leach, Billerica

Recommended by Rep. Marc Lombardo

Mary is the unofficial PR person of Billerica, helping to shine a light on the positive things happening in town. Mary's articles and images, which focus primarily on nature, people, events and happenings in Billerica, appear regularly in local newspapers (for free) as a part of her volunteer efforts. There are many Billerica boards that Mary serves on including Vice Chair of the Billerica Community Preservation Committee and Secretary of the Billerica Historical Commission. Mary is also a Precinct 3 town meeting member. She's an active member of Billerica Colonial Minute Men (and Women!), member of the Billerica Historical Society, a founding member of Beautify Billerica, a community group that organizes volunteers to collect trash across town, and an organizer of Billerica Clean Up Green Up, an annual town-wide clean-up effort held in April. We are very grateful for her dedication and commitment to her community.



Katie Leavitt Sutton , Hingham

Recommended by Rep. Joan Meschino

Katie fosters community and champions anti-racism in Hingham and beyond. As Chair of the Hingham Unity Council, Katie is a driving force behind the important diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging work pursued by the Council. Katie embodies the Council's mission and leads by example, always striving to bring people together while recognizing our common humanity. Her effective advocacy is grounded in kindness and marked by her genuine concern for the well-being of her community. In addition to her work on the Council, Katie serves on the Anti-racism Task Force at the Episcopal Parish of St. John the Evangelist and is a member of the Board of the education nonprofit Coaching4Change.



Rachel Lee, Hamilton

Recommended by Sen. Bruce Tarr

Rachel joined the staff of the Hamilton Health Department at a tumultuous time, in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Rachel who is a BSN prepared RN with two year substitute school nursing and 6 years acute care nursing experience, jumped in to help her community. As the intensity of the COVID pandemic increased Rachel rose to the many challenges and became a leader in the process of collaborating with 10 surrounding communities to form the Greater Cape Ann Community Collaborative. Rachel stepped forward and took on the responsibilities of incident commander for the collaborative. Her team formed a command staff conducted daily vaccine clinics in several of the participant communities. Under her oversight the collaborative continues to vaccinate and booster residents, addresses the needs of students, pediatrics, homebound residents, and residents with special circumstances.



Deb Leonczyk, Huntington

Recommended by Representative Paul Mark

Deb Leonczyk is the Executive Director of the Berkshire Community Action Council (BCAC), the region's federally designated anti-poverty agency. If you ask her staff, they will tell you that she's someone who is always focused on service, whether it's the mission and work of the organization, mentoring and supporting the team that she leads, or helping Berkshire County residents achieve sustainability and self-sufficiency. She's not someone who talks about herself or her own contributions, yet she is the glue that holds it all together. The BCAC family is very fortunate to have her at the helm. Berkshire County is a better place because of Deb's passion and commitment to bettering people's lives.



Joan Levesque Arguin, Rehoboth

Recommended by Rep. Steven Howitt

Joan delivers Meals on Wheels with her Sister Babs. Joan and Babs worked side by side until Babs recently passed away with Alzheimer's. We admired Joan's devotion to her sister. When Covid-19 hit Joan did her North Route and also took over The Southcoast Collaborative School's route. This meant Joan delivered 5 days a week. Sometimes she delivered both North and South Rehoboth routes in the same day. Joan would pack up eggs from her neighbor and deliver the eggs with meals. Joan would pass out candy treats, hats for winter, loaves of bread, potted flowers, Thanksgiving meals, etc. Joan has also created a Little Free Library at her home for all to use.



Michelle Loglisci, Monson

Recommended by Sen. Ryan Fattman

Michelle is a founding member of MA Residents Against Crumbling Concrete. Her advocacy on the local, state, and national level is responsible for bringing attention to a critical issue that can completely uproot the lives of homeowners across the Commonwealth. Some house foundations that were poured with concrete that contains the mineral pyrrhotite, which can cause cracks in the foundation years later, making the house unsafe and hurting the value of the home. Michelle's work partners with legislators across the Commonwealth to raise awareness of this issue and develops comprehensive legislation that would provide financial relief to homeowners that need the expensive work to fix the issue. Legislation would also set quarry testing standards to prevent this devastating problem from continuing. Michelle's contribution to this important cause makes her an exceptional heroine.



Hadley Luddy, Orleans

Recommended by Rep. Sarah Peake

Hadley is Chief Executive Officer of the Homeless Prevention Council, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping Lower and Outer Cape residents attain financial independence and housing stability. Hadley brings decades of experience, having held various roles in the non-profit sector where she learned about the importance of social fabric programs to the health and wellbeing of vulnerable populations. Hadley's innovative efforts have helped HPC and its team of dedicated professionals support the local workforce, and focus on housing stabilization efforts to keep the year-round population housed. Hadley and the HPC team have been especially focused on serving those at the greatest risk of homelessness, in the midst of a serious housing crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she and her team have productively collaborated with towns and organizations in the region to provide rental, food, and financial assistance where most needed. In 2021, Hadley effectively led her team to provide excellent high-touch case management to 2,161 individuals in crisis. Hadley's leadership and stewardship of her organization makes a difference for countless Cape families and individuals.



Roberta Lynch, Franklin

Recommended by Rep. Denise Garlick

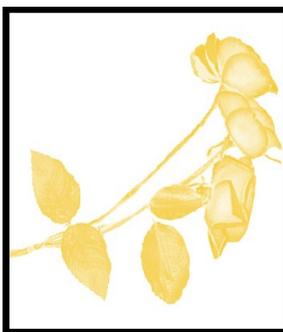
For over 20 years Roberta has served as the Director of Medfield's Council on Aging where she has done an outstanding job of enhancing the quality of life and promoting independence among older adults in her community. Addressing the emotional, social, physical and spiritual needs of older adults during the pandemic has taken a herculean effort. Knowing the negative impact of isolation, Roberta ensured that seniors remained engaged, organizing a plethora of online and outdoor activities so they could safely gather. A registered nurse, Roberta also offered blood pressure screenings to monitor the health of her clients. Roberta is owed a debt of gratitude for her compassion, insight and ability to ensure that the seniors in her community remained healthy and active.



Maribeth Lynch, Shrewsbury

Recommended by Rep. Hannah Kane

Maribeth Lynch, Broker/Owner of Thrive Real Estate Specialists, loves her town and works hard to make it even better. A founding member of the Shrewsbury Town Center Association (STCA), Maribeth is one of Shrewsbury's greatest cheerleaders. She co-chairs the annual Yuletide Market and Light the Common, STCA's signature event, which draws thousands to the Town Common for an outside evening of holiday shopping, refreshments, entertainment and camaraderie. Maribeth's civic pride shows in her volunteer work with the public schools, library, the Master Plan Steering Committee, the Beal Re-use Committee as well as her position as Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals. For added fun, her brokerage even hosts an ice cream truck on the last day of school. Shrewsbury is so fortunate!



Patti Machado, Centerville

Recommended by Rep. Kip Diggs

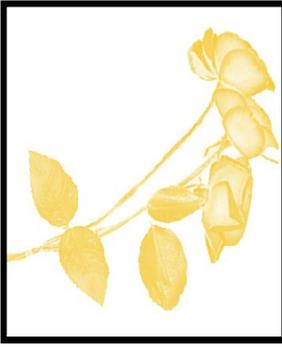
Patti has been employed for 45 years with the Town of Barnstable Recreation Division working way up from lifeguard, office assistant, and coach to the Director of Recreation through retirement in 2022. At the Town of Barnstable Youth Commission, Patti has provided guidance in building confidence among youth. Patti's strength is team building and getting the very best for the Town of Barnstable and its visitors. Patti has been one of the leaders in the State with all aspects of Aquatic Management including through Covid. She is certified at the Advanced Level in National Aquatic Management and has developed various Recreation profession networking groups on the Cape.



Maryellen Maguire-Eisen, Hingham

Recommended by Sen. Patrick O'Connor

In 2003, Maryellen founded the Children Melanoma Prevention Foundation (CMPF) with the mission to prevent skin cancer one child at a time through education and advocacy. Maryellen developed the award winning SunAware curriculum and went into many Massachusetts schools, teaching the SunAware lessons, as well as providing professional development to staff. The impact of the Children's Melanoma Prevention Foundation has gone beyond education. Maryellen worked with other community groups and health professionals on legislation that was signed by Governor Baker in 2016 banning indoor tanning for minors. She advocated and promoted programs such as Melanoma Monday and Don't Fry Day to help spread awareness. In 2022, the Children Melanoma Prevention Foundation (CMPF) merged with the Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF), the largest independent organization dedicated to melanoma. The SunAware curriculum and education resources are now part of MRF where Maryellen serves in the role of education consultant.



Marcia Manong, Malden

Recommended by Senator Jason Lewis Marcia

Manong's early passion for social justice was inspired by her participation in voter registration campaigns with the NAACP during the summer of 1964. Later, as a social worker at the Dimock Street Preschool in Roxbury, MA, Manong produced a documentary about the school and this film led her to complete a Master of Arts at Goddard College, VT in 1977. When Manong moved to South Africa in 1994, she again became directly engaged in social justice as the Regional Manager for a non-profit called Operation Hunger that assisted rural communities in combating food insecurity through communal cultivation. This work led to other major leadership positions, including an appointment with the Board of the National Development Agency and to serving as a National Mediation Panelist. Back in Malden, Manong continues her civic work by participating as a member of Malden's Community Organizing for Racial Equality (Malden CORE), Mass Senior Action, Malden River Works, and other community organizations.



Ann McGonigle Santos, Wakefield

Recommended by Rep. Kate Lipper-Garabedian

Associate Dean of Students as well as Disability Services Coordinator for Suffolk University Law School. she began her legal career in the Middlesex County District Attorney's Office working on a variety of cases ranging from domestic violence to arson and murder. Ann then joined the Suffolk University School of Law faculty in 1998, working as an Associate Professor of Legal Writing for 16 years before joining the Dean of Students Office in 2014. Ann was appointed and then elected to the Wakefield Board of Health in April 2007 and served until 2013. She then ran for the (then) Board of Selectman in 2013 and served nine years on the Board of Selectman/Town Council, including twice as Chair. Along with Town Administrator Steve Maio and fellow Councilor Mehreen Butt, Ann was instrumental in advocating successfully for the name change from Board of Selectman to Town Council. She will leave the Town Council in April 2022 after choosing not to seek reelection. Ann also serves on the Board of the Wakefield Cooperative Bank. Ann is married to Shaun Santos. They have 2 children – Connor, a junior at Catholic University, and Bridget, a freshman at the University of Michigan.



Joanne McKenna, Revere

Recommended by Rep. Jeffrey Rosario Turco

Joanne spent over three decades teaching in Revere Public Schools, sharing her passion for the arts with thousands of students and starting Revere High School's first clothing bank. For the last seven years, a time of transformational commercial development and population growth in Revere, Joanne has served steadfastly on the Revere City Council, as Vice President and as the representative of Ward One. Last year, the Mayor selected her to serve as the Chairwoman of Revere's newly established Public Arts Commission, deeming her the optimal choice for developing Revere into a vibrant arts community. Having someone like Joanne McKenna who is deeply connected to Revere's past, present and future, and who leads with a steady, consistent and inclusive hand, is indispensable to the City's ongoing transformation. Revere is lucky to have Joanne and she is more than deserving of this honor.



Kenann McKenzie-DeFranza, Beverly

Recommended by Rep. Jerald Parisella

Dr. Kenann McKenzie-DeFranza comes readily to mind when one contemplates the values of perseverance and equity. Immigrating to the United States at the age of seven, Dr. McKenzie-DeFranza believes that her time growing up in the United States exposed her to the disparities in access to education and across the globe and cemented her interest in working to eliminate racial disparities in high quality educational access. In 2020, Dr. McKenzie-DeFranza was the first person of color elected to the Beverly School Committee. During her time on the school committee, she has continued to devote herself to the idea that every child has equal access to a nurturing and high quality education- be it in her professional work spanning 25 years in all aspects of educational practice, policy and research - as well as various civic activities. Throughout her life, Dr. McKenzie-DeFranza has established herself as a heroine and role model for young people to look up to. She is inspired by her own children and the desire to see all children, no matter their backgrounds, to be held as precious gifts to the community.



Betsy Merry, Salem

Recommended by Rep. Paul Tucker

Betsy is one of Salem's most respected community leaders through her work with several local charities, the Salem YMCA, the Salem Partnership, and being a mentor and role model for aspiring women in business. She is a person who gives so much of her time and her generosity to many causes and people in need has made incredibly positive changes in people's lives. Betsy has been a longtime Board member of our local YMCA and has done extraordinary work in leadership and fundraising roles. Starting her professional life as a teacher and then transitioning into the real estate business, she has built a business that enjoys an impeccable reputation. Betsy is an extraordinary woman who is an integral part of our community.



Sandy Middleton, Cambridge

Recommended by Rep. Mike Connolly

Sandy has worked at the Artur D. Little School of Management, the East Boston Ecumenical Community Council, Transition House in Cambridge, and Very Special Arts, Massachusetts to name a few. Currently, Sandy Middleton works as an ESOL instructor at the Cambridge Center for Adult Education, and the Cambridge Community Learning Center.

Throughout her life she has valued humanitarian causes of all kinds. She has a particular interest in efforts that promote immigrant rights, women's rights, disability rights and housing justice, and to further those causes, she currently serves on the board of the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition. Sandy is the mother of two beloved sons and values the joys of friendship and community and in her spare time enjoys walking and observing nature.



Cathy Miles, Framingham

Recommended by Rep. Maria Robinson

After many years of volunteer service to a wide variety of organizations in the community, Cathy Miles realized that Framingham lacked a critical service that was increasingly needed by the city's population. While services existed to prevent and treat substance use disorder, there was no organized effort focused on supporting people in recovery. After studying models in other communities, Cathy founded Framingham FORCE (Fostering Opioid Recovery Compassion and Education) in 2018. She identified two key ways to provide this support: raising awareness—and hope—that recovery can happen, and destigmatizing opioid misuse. Cathy moved expediently to incorporate FORCE as a Massachusetts nonprofit, establish a board of directors, and begin fundraising and program development. She continues to serve as chair of the board of directors for this all-volunteer organization, in addition to serving on the Committee to Break the Silence for Voices Against Violence. She previously served on the board of directors of Hoops & Homework and Leadership MetroWest.



Chanie Minkowitz, Sharon

Recommended by Rep. Edward Philips

Chanie Minkowitz is a phenomenal person who gives selflessly of her time and energy in the Town of Sharon. The driving force behind The Friendship Circle, a non-profit serving children in the Jewish community with special needs, Chanie has created multiple programs that further life skills, sibling support, family fun days, and so much more.

In just a few short years, Chanie has grown this wonderful organization from a few buddies to an operation with over fifty volunteers and twenty children.



Carol Mori, Beverly

Recommended by Sen. Joan Lovely

Carol is a long-time Beverly resident, 23-year breast cancer survivor and an active member in the community. At the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, she and her daughter teamed up to raise funds for the North Shore Cancer WALK by making and distributing masks to family, friends and community members. Carol used her grandmother's 1941 Singer sewing machine to sew more than 2,500 cloth masks for this cause. Together they raised over \$17,000 for the 2020 North Shore Cancer WALK, which provides cancer patients access to state-of-the-art treatment. Carol is an active member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and in 2021, received a National Community Service Award for the hours she devoted to mask making. In addition, Carol has been the Historian and Archivist for the Patton Family Archives of the Wenham Museum since 2008.



Sarah Moser, Amesbury

Recommended by Rep. Andres "Andy" Vargas

As Library Director, Sarah has expanded services, increased access, removed fees and implemented a vision for equity at the Haverhill Public Library. During the pandemic, she consistently looked out for her staff and greater Haverhill readers and constituents. Under her leadership, the library permanently ended late fees to boost equal access for residents. Moser has also led public art projects in the library that reflect the diversity of the greater Haverhill community. Her leadership with the local literacy collaborative Haverhill Promise has been crucial to fostering a culture of early literacy and learning in Haverhill. Moser's role as a partner to the community has even led her to facilitate books being provided to a correctional facility for rehabilitation and re-entry. Her leadership has been crucial to the many stakeholders the library serves and partners with.



Lisa Nemeth, Ludlow

Recommended by Rep. Jacob Oliveira

Lisa is currently serving as Interim Superintendent of the Ludlow Public Schools. Prior, she had been proudly serving as the principal of Ludlow High School from the past ten years. During this time, she has focused on developing positive relationships within the community, working collaboratively to support students and staff to reach their greatest potential, strengthening a connection between school and home, and fostering a positive school culture. In the past year she has been faced with a myriad of challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and changing educational curriculum. Despite these many challenges Nemeth has never shied away from speaking truth to power, and doing what is best for the district and the students — no matter how difficult the decisions are.



Marleen Nienhuis, Boston

Recommended by Rep. Jon Santiago

Marleen helped found the Friends of Titus Sparrow Park, raised funds for its summer music and children's programs and, as its president, guided it through its long-overdue renovation in 2000. In the 1990s, she discovered a local realty company was buying residential buildings and evicting long-term residents to illegally replace them with short-term rentals for tourists. In response, she convinced the City of Boston to sue the realtor. That battle revealed the vulnerability of residential housing to speculators and eventually led to regulations of short-term rentals to help protect Boston's affordable housing stock. When in 2010 Boston wanted to shutter up to a third of its twenty-four Boston Public Library branches, she alerted the Boston Globe's editors to the upcoming closure vote by BPL trustees. With many others, she successfully lobbied Boston's elected city and state officials for support to keep all BPL branches open. The Friends of the South End Library she founded then raised funds for an interior renovation and the redesign of adjacent Library Park, which was completed in 2020.



Nicole Obi, Chestnut Hill

Recommended by Sen. Karen Spilka

As President and CEO of the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA), Nicole Obi is one of the Commonwealth's premier advocates fighting to close the racial wealth gap and to build Black wealth and employment in Massachusetts. Nicole Obi is a strategic planner and a serial entrepreneur who argues that Black-owned businesses are one of the primary drivers of Black wealth and employment. Under her leadership, BECMA has sought to extend support to Black-owned businesses by identifying and advocating for supportive public policies, convening stakeholders for important conversations, and connecting business owners to contract opportunities and technical assistance. Her efforts have brought assistance to hundreds of Black business owners, and she recently developed a pilot program to aid micro and small businesses in their efforts to pivot to digital platforms. She is also actively involved in numerous community organizations and serves as Boston's Chief of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion.



Tamika Olszewski, Auburndale

Recommended by Rep. Kay Khan

Tamika Olszewski is an attorney by profession. While practicing law, she worked in civil litigation. She is an active member of the Maryland and Massachusetts Bar Associations. She serves as the Chair of the Newton School Committee and is an actively involved parent leader in the schools. Additionally, she also serves as Vice Chair of the Burr School Council and a Commissioner on the Newton Human Rights Commission, which ensures mutual understanding and respect of all persons and promotes acceptance of diversity, and serves as a member on number of other committees and groups working to advance causes beneficial to Newton residents. She has spent years working for Newton and Newton's 22 schools helping them to engage with parents and the wider community. She proactively and tirelessly works toward the district-wide goal of excellence and equity for all students.



Arlene Omosofunmi, Fall River

Recommended by Rep. Carole Fiola

Arlene Omosofunmi serves as the Cook Manager for the Resiliency Preparatory Academy in Fall River, as well as, the Boys and Girls Club for several years prior to that. Through her service, she feeds some of the city's highest-needs students with a smile and a caring attitude. Arlene's cheerful and friendly approach makes her a great employee and colleague. Everyone who meets Arlene can see what a lasting impact she has on the children and families she serves. She is a role model for the staff she works with and for the kids she provides food to every day. The community cannot thank her enough for her dedication and kindness.



Alison Page, Town of Tyngsborough

Recommended by Rep. Colleen M. Garry

Alison has been an employee of the town since 2004 as the Recreation Department Director. Since taking the position of Director, she has created and broadened the role of the position to unite and meet the needs of the ever growing community of Tyngsborough. She has worked diligently over the years to create strong community morale with events she has created that the town looks forward to yearly. Some of these events include the Shamrock Ball (Father Daughter Dance), the Memorial Day Parade, the Town Block Party and the Festival of Trees. If you've been to one of these incredible town events you know the amount of time poured into every detail is unmatched. When she's not planning an event or hosting a wedding at the Old Town Hall, Alison can always be found at the concession stand on game days for Little League Baseball games. As if this isn't enough, she also oversees the maintenance and care of our town beaches, parks and fields, providing families with safe and fun areas for play and relaxation. Her passion to unite the town is honorable.



Margaret "Peg" Page, Plymouth

Recommended by Rep. Matt Muratore

As a volunteer, Peg was one of first to step through the door and create a vision for the Plymouth Center for the Arts. Eight years later she became the volunteer president. Peg leads an organization of 600+ members and 100+ volunteers, offering art classes year-round, a beautiful Artisan Shop, galleries that are open free to the public, and a full schedule of art shows and special events. Peg has also been at the helm throughout a major multi-year renovation that transformed PCA into an ADA-accessible building. She applied her tremendous spirit and interpersonal skills to spearhead the \$2 million capital campaign that made it all possible. Peg reminds everyone that PCA is a "community" art center. She interfaces with the community, peer organizations, and local and state leaders, fostering appreciation and support for the belief that cultural experience and the arts are essential to a vibrant, healthy community.



Adriana Paz, Lynn

Recommended by Sen. Brendan Crighton

Adriana is an indispensable community leader, activist and change agent in Lynn. In the past couple of years, she has co-founded Mutual Aid Lynn, a service organization where people work cooperatively to meet the needs of everyone in the community and Prevent the Cycle, an organization committed to racial equity and systemic change through community engagement, education and policy reform. Adrianna was also founding member of North Shore Women of Color. She also serves as Vice-President of the North Shore Juneteenth Association and co-chair of Lynn Racial Justice Coalition, which successfully advocated to fund a crisis-response team in Lynn.



Kathleen Pease, North Andover

Recommended by Rep. Christina Minicucci

Kathleen has always gone above and beyond, in her job and outside of work, to connect students and families with services to help them thrive. When Kathleen finds a gap in services, she looks for solutions. With fellow teacher Debbi Raffalli, she created the Knights Closet at the Middle School, a “store” where students can discreetly browse for gently used and new clothes, toiletries, and more. When schools closed down in March of 2020, Kathleen joined other school nurses, to help the town with contact tracing and as unemployment and food insecurity rose in town, she joined other town employees to create a food pantry in town. Quietly and without fanfare, she has assisted countless students and community members find success.



Jane Piercy, Brookline

Recommended by Rep. Tommy Vitolo

Jane defends reproductive freedom and women’s rights with a focus on equity and bringing others into the fight. Since 2017, Jane has served as a Board Member for the Reproductive Equity Now Foundation, an organization she began volunteering for in the 1980s and she recently joined the Reproductive Equity Now staff as Managing Director. Her advocacy and testimony before the State Legislature was instrumental in the passage of the ROE Act and the Paid Family Medical Leave Act. Locally, Jane served as a Brookline Town Meeting member from 2016- 2022 and co-leads a local group that supports an independent abortion provider. Jane’s dedication to access and equity at all levels of government is admirable.



Lisa Piscatelli, Mansfield

Recommended by Sen. Paul R. Feeney

Lisa is the Executive Director of Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative where she is dedicated to alleviating hunger and inspiring the community to thrive. Through a network of houses of worship and dedicated volunteers, the Collaborative operates the Food n’ Friends program, which serves emergency, nutritious and comforting meals to area residents. During the pandemic, this program took on enhanced importance toward alleviating food insecurity in the region. A 22-year nonprofit professional, Lisa’s prior positions include Director of Development at YWCA Rhode Island, and Editor of She Shines™ Magazine. She also served as Chair of the Mansfield Local Cultural Council. Lisa currently serves as Vice President on the Board of Directors of Community Health Systems Foundation. Threaded throughout her professional and volunteer work, Lisa is a strong advocate for social justice in the community.



Tracy Priestner, Westport

Recommended by Rep. Paul Schmid

Tracy has been an elementary school teacher, working in education for over 28 years. She is dedicated to promoting, improving, and tirelessly advocating for public education. Tracy is passionate about raising funds to support public school and volunteering in her local community. She is a member of the Westport Finance Committee and is responsible for developing a fiscally responsible budget and is a liaison to the community, agricultural, and vocational schools serving Westport students. Additionally, Tracy volunteers extensively within the Westport and Tiverton education committees dedicated to raising funds for public education, awarding scholarships to aspiring educators, and improving public education from all angles. Tracy has dedicated years to the service of others, no one exemplifies the world heroine like she does.



Maureen Reilly Meagher, Newton

Recommended by Rep. Ruth B. Balse

To Maureen, all politics is local! She is passionate about improving the quality of life in her neighborhood. She is tireless in her efforts to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to Newton roads and advocates for improvements for traffic safety. Additionally, she works to protect the conservation areas in both the Charles River Reservation and Hemlock Gorge. She is a past member of the Waban Area Council and is a member of the Friends of Quinobequin Road and the Friends of Hemlock Gorge. She is a leader who brings so many together. We are all grateful!



Suzanne Remington, Shrewsbury

Recommended by Sen. Michael Moore

Suzanne is a constituent from Shrewsbury who has always devoted her energy to making her community better. Suzanne is a past board member of the Shrewsbury Education Foundation, and serves as a Town Meeting Member from Shrewsbury's Precinct 9. She was honored by the CASA Project of Worcester County on March 6, 2020 with the Volunteer of the Year Award for her dedication to children in welfare at the 2nd Annual Champions for Children Celebration. Suzanne works with the FaCES THREdS team and is a volunteer advocate for CASA. In 2014, she played a leadership role in the initiative to pass Shrewsbury's first operational override, providing critical funding to Shrewsbury Public Schools. I have worked with Suzanne in her advocacy on matters relating to the Worcester Juvenile Court system and know she is well deserving of this recognition.



Patricia Romney, Amherst

Recommended by Rep. Mindy Domb

Former member of the Board of Directors of the Amherst A Better Chance Program, Founding Board Member of Amherst Neighbors, and Co-Founder and Co-President of the Roger Wallace Excellence in Teaching Foundation, Dr. Patricia Romney is a clinical and organizational psychologist serving elders and their families, and working as a leadership coach to this generation's leaders.



Mary Jo Rossetti, Somerville

Recommended by Rep. Christine Barber

Mary Jo served Somerville for decades, impacting the lives of children and families. A seven-term School Committee member and four-term Somerville City Councilor, Mary Jo's multi fold community volunteerism began as Secretary-Treasurer of the Powder House Community School PTA. Following her election to the Somerville School Committee in 1999, Mary Jo soon became active in the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, ultimately serving as President of the statewide association, representing school committees around the country and in Washington, D.C.

Mary Jo has been a forceful advocate for school funding and supportive services for staff, children, and their families. She actively took part in building a new high school in Somerville. Known for her deep relationships in the community, she was always able to dive into details to meet the needs of the city.



Cynthia Roy, New Bedford

Recommended by Rep. Antonio F.D. Cabral

Dr. Roy, PhD, is a professional educator, organizer, and activist. She has recently earned her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and a member of the MTA Executive Committee, Cynthia is the co-founder of the New Bedford Coalition to Save Our Schools (NBCSOS), a grassroots educational justice organization committed to racial and economic justice. Cynthia is a fervent supporter of quality public education and believes that true social change begins in the halls of our traditional public schools. With the NBCSOS, Cynthia organized and rallied the "people power" which was instrumental in halting the expansion of another charter school in New Bedford and Fall River. Everyday she is modeling active, civic engagement – and our community is very fortunate to benefit from her dedication and commitment.



Clare Ryan LaMattina, Whitman

Recommended by Rep. Alyson Sullivan

Clare is currently a sophomore at Thayer Academy. In 2020, when Covid-19 flung itself at us all at full force, she organized a fundraiser: the goal was to raise \$1,000 for the Whitman Food Pantry by selling a sign to display hope in the community that it needed to push through the pandemic. Once the “Whitman Strong” fundraiser was underway she had an overwhelming response. She was able to raise over \$17,000 to date for the food pantry. A few other communities adopted this idea and were also able to step up and provide for their own local food pantries. Even during a time that was so hard, people were able to come together for the greater good, and that is what gives her hope for a bright future for her community and many others.



Susan Salamoff, Natick

Recommended by Rep. David Linsky

Susan Salamoff has served many years as a Member of the Natick Select Board, was the author of Natick’s home rule charter, as a Natick Town Meeting Member and has been instrumental in the growth and revitalization of Natick. She has dedicated her life to making Natick a great place to live, work and raise a family.



Mechilia Salazar, Longmeadow

Recommended by Sen. Eric Lesser

Mechilia is the President and CEO of the Ludlow Boys and Girls Club. In particular, the work during the pandemic to offer child care, after school care and meals at the Club was foundational support to families in our community. Mechilia started her career in corporate sales and marketing after graduating from Colby-Sawyer College with a degree in Child Development and Early Childhood Education. She went on to combine both experiences to lead the Middlesex County Boys & Girls Clubs as their executive director. During her tenure, she rebuilt the organization at every level. Her bold leadership of clubs spanned across 3 cities and led to an expansion into a 4th city and the creation of one of Boys & Girls Clubs’ first teen-only clubs in the country. She is an alumnus of the Institute for Nonprofit Practice and has served on faculty as a Senior Fellow as well as a mentor.



Marlene Santos, Fall River

Recommended by Rep. Alan Silvia

Marlene is a longtime employee of Swansea Public Schools. She started volunteering when her oldest daughter began elementary school. There was no PTO, so she started one that became very successful with about 40 active parents. As her children got older, she became involved in their high school sports booster clubs. She now spends much of her time volunteering at the local soup kitchen, her church at different events throughout the year, serves on the pastoral council, and is chairperson of the annual feast. She also organizes a holiday donation drive at her place of employment. Some of her new endeavors are the homeless population, local pet shelter and a donation drive for the people of Ukraine.



Julia Silverio, Lawrence

Recommended by Rep. Frank Moran

Julia Silverio is the founder of Silverio Insurance Agency, that provides business and personal insurance in the Merrimack Valley, including the Greater Lawrence Area, the Greater Lowell Area and throughout the state of Massachusetts.

Founded in 1984, Silverio Insurance Agency is a leader in providing quality protection for individuals, families, and businesses throughout New England.

Julia is well known throughout the city of Lawrence for her outgoing and caring dedication to her clients and her community at-large – evaluating each client’s individual needs so that they are being provided with the services that will have a brighter, more secure future for years to come.



Annette Simmons, Springfield

Recommended by Rep. Orlando Ramos

Pastor Annette Simmons is 1 of the founding members of the scan 360 in the city of Springfield, MA to help parents whose children have various disabilities - for over 25 years she has been a member of the federation for children with disabilities . Pastor Simmons has a non profit - A family that prays together stays together - She counsels Family!

She is a certified Domestic Violence and Mental Health counselor. She works to reduce gang violence and prisons reentry by mentoring youth as a vocational skills counselor

Pastor works with homeless community and she works with the community on suicide prevention! She holds clothing drives for young girls. She is also a 10 year Board member of DMR.



Danielle Smida, Haverhill

Recommended by Rep. Linda Dean Campbell

Danielle takes her civic and community responsibility to the next level by committing her time and energy to community projects and initiatives that focus on historic preservation, access to art and creative experiences, and ensuring that generations to come can flourish as the Greater Haverhill community develops and grows. She is the founder of the Cogswell ArtSpace Campaign in Haverhill, which aims to revitalize a closed school to be used as a place to create and showcase the community's art. She has also served as the Chair of Creative Haverhill, the Bradford Rail Trail development, and has served on the board for the Greater Haverhill Foundation. Danielle serves on the Haverhill School District Site Council and as an officer of the Caleb D. Hunking School PTO. Her dedication is very appreciated.

Some of her new endeavors are the homeless population, local pet shelter and a donation drive for the people of Ukraine.



Anne Marie Stronach, Tewksbury

Recommended by Sen. Barry Finegold

Anne is an outstanding public servant and current member of the Tewksbury Select Board. Anne Marie was first inspired to run for office after joining the U25 group, dedicated to decreasing the number of students per classroom throughout the district. Since then, she has utilized her position as a selectwoman to fiercely advocate for Tewksbury Public Schools and bridge the gap between the town and schools. Currently, she serves as the Chair of Tewksbury's Elementary School Building Committee and has been instrumental in keeping the project on track and within budget despite the pandemic. The Town of Tewksbury is so fortunate to have such a dedicated and compassionate leader.



Susan Swanson, Worcester

Recommended by Rep. David LeBoeuf

Sue is the co-founder of the Coes Zone Task Force which was instrumental in getting the city of Worcester to construct the first multi-generational and universally accessible playground, now Coes Park. The Coes Zone Task force held several Family Festival Days at Binienda beach before the pandemic. All food, and watercraft rides were free as well as children's books. Sue is also an active member of the Columbus Park Neighborhood Association and Tatnuck Brook Watershed Association. Professionally, Sue is a speech language Pathologist, a med school instructor, and the program coordinator for the Pathways to Inclusive Health Care Program at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center. Sue has committed herself to advocating for those with different abilities, promoting authentic inclusivity, and making sure disability equity is at the forefront of community planning. The City of Worcester and Central Mass are a healthier, more inclusive place because of her continued efforts.



Jocelyn Tager, Watertown

Recommended by Rep. Steven Owens

In 2014, Jocelyn Tager, Ph.D. created a transparent and fair solar group-buy called Neighborhood Solar. A labor of love, that small program now has two megawatts of solar installed throughout Massachusetts. She proposed and advocated for a solar zone ordinance, passed by Watertown's Town Council in November 2018, making Watertown the first municipality in New England to require solar installations on all new commercial, industrial, and residential projects of a certain size and all parking garages. Watertown's solar ordinance has inspired other communities throughout the Commonwealth to adopt similar proposals. Thanks to the tireless advocacy of Jocelyn and members of Watertown Faces Climate Change, the two new elementary schools Watertown opened this year, designed to produce as much energy as they use, are the first two net-zero energy schools in the Commonwealth. Given the groundwork laid by the ordinance, the dogged work of Watertown's local advocates, and the School Building Committee, Watertown's new high school will also be a net-zero energy building.



Pam Tarallo, Attleboro

Recommended by Rep. James Hawkins

Pam just celebrated 20 years of serving meal to our most vulnerable in Attleboro. The Food N Friends program that she manages went from a soup kitchen serving 30-35 meals a night to a Meals-to-go program that served over 200 meals a night during the Pandemic. During the Pandemic, she brought in two new kitchens. She and her loyal volunteers served these meals six days a week year round. Since COVID this is outside and in any weather from the heat of summer to the cold wintery days. She has the respect of all and is a passionate advocate for the chronically homeless. If that isn't enough she manages the Summer Eats program that provides lunch for low income students during school vacation.



Nancy Thomas, Somerset

Recommended by Rep. Patricia A. Haddad

Nancy Thomas is the "Erin Brockovitch" of Somerset. She was a huge part of a push by she and 2 other women to fight a huge corporation that was polluting their neighborhood. They recently won on all counts in land court. She and her fellow crusaders were sued personally. She put her own personal financial stability behind her belief that what was happening to her town and neighborhood was wrong.



Ann Toland, Braintree

Recommended by Sen. Walter Timilty

Ann is the managing director of the Marge Crispin Center in the Town of Braintree. Here, she helps residents in need to find shelter, care, food, and other important resources. She is a former member of the Parish Council and former Committee member that helped decorate Sacred Heart Church in Weymouth Landing for the holidays. She is currently the chair of the Board of Trustees of the Thayer Public Library and was a member of Mayor Joseph Sullivan's transition committee. She is also active in the East Braintree Civic Association and current member of the Braintree Community Task Force. Furthermore, Ann was a longtime volunteer with the Labor Guild of the Archdiocese of Boston. Ann has always put other people's best interest before her own and has found great joy in service to others.



Helena Tonge, Hyde Park (Boston)

Recommended by Rep. Brandy Fluker Oakley

Helena Tonge is a zealous advocate for her community and for Hyde Park. She not only ensures that her neighbors' interests are represented, but she also always makes sure that the community is engaged and has a seat at the table. Helena is active in the many projects that are occurring in the Belnel neighborhood. Her dedication to make each of these projects successful for all is both admirable and inspirational. The combination of her hard work, passion to improve her community for all residents, and her constant diligence to have an inclusive and equitable community process by amplifying community voices is deeply appreciated.



Tammy Turner, Everett

Recommended by Rep. Joseph McGonagle

In addition to her various teaching positions at Everett Public Schools, Tammy has also served as Girls Basketball Coach, football trainer, served on the Advisory Committee, Key Club, Junior/Senior Class Advisor and Student Athlete Leader Advisor.

Tammy was a strong advocate of the importance of exercise for the students during COVID. During the pandemic, you could find Tammy volunteering at the Food Pantry and even hand washing all the sports uniforms herself! For over fifteen years, she was responsible for organizing and participating in the Annual Homecoming Hustle each year and encouraging student athletes to participate.

Since she has become Athletic Director, Tammy has attended every home game for every sport; many times, attending two games in one evening.

Modest by nature, Tammy is always the first one to help! She is the epitome of selflessness.

Her kind and friendly demeanor has made her a favorite in the Everett High School community among both students and faculty - we are lucky!



Paulette Van der Kloot, Medford

Recommended by Sen. Patricia Jehlen

In 32 years on the Medford School Committee, Paulette Van der Kloot led transformative changes in the schools. A parent activist, she won her School Committee election with the slogan "Give a Hoot, Vote Van der Kloot." Paulette strongly advocated for early education and special education, supporting the Medford Family Network and the Curtis-Tufts alternative high school. She supported the Center for Citizenship and Social Responsibility, an acclaimed model of student civic engagement. When Paulette was elected, she found school buildings in disrepair, and worked to build new schools and renovate the high school.

Paulette's empathy, curiosity and energy are boundless. While on the School Committee, she earned a masters degree in education, opened a toy store, directed Winchester Hospital's, junior volunteer program, and attended virtually every school performance, sports event, and club activity. She also served as officer and president of the Mass. Association of School Committees.



Fredericka Veikley, Boston

Recommended by Sen. William Brownsberger

Fredericka Veikley has been an active member of the Fenway neighborhood in Boston for over 40 years. She has devoted herself to the enhancement and protection of green spaces in this rapidly developing neighborhood by advocating for new green spaces, serving on oversight committees, planting trees, and leading fundraising efforts. Fredericka's commitment to this work is fueled by her care for ecological and historical preservation, and belief in the positive impact green spaces have on health, community and climate resilience. Her decades long commitment to ensuring Fenway green spaces remain open, thriving, community spaces, continues to this day.



Susan Verdicchio, Winchester

Recommended by Rep. Michael Day

Susan has served Winchester in a variety of volunteer and elected capacities, continuously working to move our community forward by building consensus and passing inclusive policies and practices. Susan has helped shepherd multiple school renovation projects to fruition and successfully advocated for the improvement of all levels of schooling in Winchester. After serving on the School Committee for 6 years, Susan joined the Winchester Select Board in 2019. With her election, Susan was part of the first majority-female Select Board in Winchester's almost 200-year history. In her time on the Select Board, Susan helped advance affordable housing projects, secure crucial education funding and ultimately help navigate the community through the COVID-19 pandemic by serving as Select Board Chair in 2021.



Toy Vongpheth, Lowell

Recommended by Rep. Vanna Howard

Toy journeyed through many refugee camps before arriving in the United States in 1987. Since many of her Lao community were unable to read or write English and their language, Toy began assisting them at a young age. Toy is currently employed at Metta Health of Lowell Community Health Center as Refugee Health Services Manager. She is instrumental in organizing, liaising, and assisting all the new arrivals in the City of Lowell from Afghanistan, Haiti, Cuba, Eritrea, and many more. She is responsible for assisting and providing health and psychosocial services to eliminate health-related barriers to successfully resettle in the United States. Fluent in English, Khmer, and Lao, Thai she understands the barriers for refugees and immigrants getting resources to resettle in the United States. For over 25 years, Toy has been a walking non-profit organization for the Cambodian and Laotian communities in the Merrimack Valley.



Mary Waldron, Brockton

Recommended by Rep. Gerard Cassidy

Mary founded the Just Checking in Fund in memory of her late husband John. The fund provides scholarships to Brockton High School graduates and supports local charities such as the Old Colony YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, the Red Cross, and the Brockton High School Musical program, to name a few. Through the Just Checking in Fund, Mary has spearheaded Operation Wreaths for Veterans in Brockton for the last eight years, coordinating volunteers to lay wreaths on veteran's graves. Mary currently serves on the Board of Directors of MassHire Greater Brockton Workforce Board and as Interim Director of the Downtown Brockton Association. Mary is the first female executive director of the Old Colony Planning Council. Mary continuously helps her community while asking for nothing in return.



Lisa Welch, Clinton

Recommended by Sen. John Cronin

Lisa has worked at WHEAT Community Connections, a direct service of the United Way of Tri-County, since 2018. Lisa has been instrumental in both the philanthropic and food security programs. She's the go to person for thrift store management and oversight of Hidden Treasures, and her expertise in balancing the mission of offering low-to-no cost goods to the community while also fundraising much needed dollars for our food programs is unmatched. Lisa also stepped up to assist with food pantry donation procurements at the food bank and retail stores and trained other staff and volunteers in the process. She's become the "must have" lead person on specialty and seasonal programs such as our "Drive thru Giveaways" and annual "Feed-A-Family Thanksgiving Program" and her numerous public and private contributions to her community and the organization make her the perfect choice for this award.



Brett Westbrook, MSW, Pittsfield

Recommended by Sen. Adam Hinds

Brett is currently the Executive Director of the Berkshire County Head Start Program, serving more than 350 children. She has approached the position as both a fellow mother and a friend to the families she serves allowing her to build real connections in the community. Throughout her time with Berkshire County Head Start she has consistently rose to the challenges presented to her, including guiding this crucial program through uncertain times during the height of the pandemic. Prior to starting as Executive Director in 2018, she served as the Program Manager at the Family Resource Center in Pittsfield; throughout her career she has consistently stepped up as a community leader in child development and family services continuing to be an invaluable asset to the region.



Carolyn Wynn, Peabody

Recommended by Rep. Thomas Walsh

Carolyn's hard work, dedication, and commitment led her to become the Executive Director of the Peabody Council on Aging. During her time as Director, Carolyn collaborated with the Board of Directors and the City to increase the number of busses in order to provide additional transportation service to the residents of Peabody. Carolyn and her staff have created numerous programs and activities as well as hosted special monthly celebrations to keep the senior population not only remain engaged but also to combat social isolation. As the pandemic changed normal life, Carolyn and her wonderful team stepped up to the challenge. They delivered over 30,000 meals across Peabody, continued to provide transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping, assisted with healthcare, housing, fuel assistance and other basic services. They continued to provide support services to caregivers and participants from their Adult Day Health Program. Many seniors were able to stay connectd to their community through the tireless work of Carolyn and her team. The Peabody community is incredibly grateful to Carolyn and her steadfast efforts to help seniors in need.



Fran Yuan, Belmont

Recommended by Rep. David Rogers

Fran worked for much of her career at the Threshold Program at Lesley University, educating young adults with diverse learning needs. She volunteered for 25 years with Belmont/Watertown Amnesty International, seeking justice for prisoners. Fran has been active in Belmont Against Racism for more than two decades and currently serves on its Board. After her son came out as gay, Fran founded the Belmont LGBTQ+ Alliance and serves as Co-chair. Additionally, Fran serves on the Belmont Human Rights Commission and is Vice President of the Belmont Pan Asian Coalition. Fran is also the Co-chair of the Social Action Committee at First Church in Belmont. Fran says, "I followed the role models of my parents who were always active in their community. I always felt committed to uplifting those who faced challenges in life. Working for equality and justice has greatly enriched my life and put me in touch with amazing activists in my community."



The Meaning of the Yellow Rose

The yellow rose is a symbol of the women who struggled for 72 years to be included in the United States Constitution. They achieved their goal through a peaceful revolution without firing a single shot.

Courageous suffragists faced jail, hunger strikes, years of organizing, ridicule, and great disappointment before achieving full suffrage when the 19th Amendment was finally adopted in 1920.

They came from rural and urban backgrounds, different economic classes, different races and generations. They worked together. Diversity became their strength as they united under a symbol: the yellow rose. The yellow rose stood for unity, friendship, and determination.

Today, the yellow rose reminds us that our own work to improve the status of women in the Commonwealth continues... requiring diversity, unity, and determination. We must strive for victory in our own peaceful revolutions.



THE MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN



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