



# Sterling House

COMMUNITY CENTER

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## Sterling House honors volunteers at Annual Dinner held October 13

STRATFORD, CT (October 24, 2016) - At its Annual Dinner held in mid-October, Sterling House Community Center honored a host of volunteers who have helped the agency “make a difference” in the greater Stratford community during the 2015-2016 fiscal year that ended on June 30.

The honorees were presented with certificates by agency program and included: Resource Connection Program presented by Director Ray O’Donnell – to Jimmy Gonzalez, Melissa Kuian and Kathy Edwards; Athletics Program presented by Director Bill O’Brien – to Erin McLaughlin, Ritty MacDaniel and Rob Iassogna; Golf Event Committee’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary recognition certificates presented by Special Events Coordinator Patty Calabrese – to State Rep. Laura Hoydick, Paul Hoydick, Debbie Higgins, Steve Kutash, Stu Walls, Maureen Doherty, Roseann Santamaria, Robert Betlinski, Eric Booth and Wayne Booth.



Board President James Millward

Also, Teen volunteer certificates presented by Program and Volunteer Coordinator Pam Robertson – to Annie Tran, Brianna D’Haiti and Kaya Wells and Adult volunteer Angel Rivera; Event volunteer presented by Calabrese – to Rochelle LaPorte and Anne Wargo, and, Pre-school Program certificate presented by Director Priscilla Choquette – to Quinn Granado.

Board President James Millward welcomed the gathering of about 60 people in the agency’s auditorium by noting “it is a great time to be a part of Sterling House.



Pre-school volunteer, Quinn Granado, is shown above, middle, flanked by his father, Denis, himself a long-time Sterling House volunteer coach, and mother, Maggie.

“There is so much happening and so much change on the horizon,” he said, noting “we have a new executive director – Amanda Meeson, who I’m sure you all know by now and who has big plans going forward. We also have a new development director, Chris Carroll.”

Millward added that at this time next year “we will have a newly refurbished building” that will include a new elevator, public lobby, offices, food pantry and more user-friendly program spaces made possible by more than \$1.5 million in state funding.

But while noting that “change is exciting, it is sometimes hard and is often scary.

“But if change is any way daunting, we should not forget that there is a mission here at Sterling House – to foster the physical, social, emotional, artistic and intellectual growth of our community.

“That mission guides us and creates the solid foundation for what we can accomplish,” Millward said. “And that foundation is fortified by people – people like yourselves,” referencing the volunteers, staff, board, trustees and friends in attendance.

“Tonight, then, is about saying ‘thank you’ to all who devote time and energy to Sterling House.

“Each of us has families, jobs and obligations – and it says a lot that each of you choose to donate the most precious gift we have – our time. Because without that donation, Sterling House could not and would not be all that it can be.”

Millward then referenced Cordelia Sterling, the benefactor who made Sterling House Community Center possible via a gift of house and land on Main Street made in 1932.

“The will of Cordelia speaks of ‘embodying the spirit of Sterling House.’ By that, she wanted each of us to take the good that is Sterling House and to spread it throughout the community.

“Her goal for us was not just to be supporters, but to be ambassadors of this place, to cultivate the work of Sterling House with our families, our friends and our business acquaintances to help ensure that this community center would be around for many generations to come.



**Rochelle LaPorte of the Professional Development Network at Sikorsky receives her certificate from Patty Calabrese.**



**Sterling House Golf Classic Committee members pictured include State Rep. Laura Hoydick, Steve Kutash, Paul Hoydick, Calabrese, Debbie Higgins and Maureen Doherty. Missing from photo: Stu Walls, Maureen Doherty, Roseann Santamaria, Robert Betlinski, Eric Booth and Wayne Booth.**

“So with the guidance of our mission, the words of Cordelia herself, and the excitement of an increasingly bright future at Sterling House, I would encourage each of you to keep this agency in your hearts.”

Millard then proposed “a toast to all the volunteers who make this possible,” which was followed by Executive Director Meeson, who noted that each year Sterling House has close to 1,000 volunteers, not all of whom could possibly be acknowledged in one evening and who are all “special and appreciated” in their own right.

“Tonight we honor those” who have been singled out by our staff for their “special commitment” during the past fiscal year, Meeson said. She also took the opportunity “to thank all our volunteers and the people of Stratford for your continued support” as the agency approaches its 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017.

For more information on Sterling House Community Center, its programs and services, call (203) 378-2620, visit the House at 2283 Main St., or go to its web site at [www.sterlinghousecc.org](http://www.sterlinghousecc.org).

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