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Maine Seacoast Mission Announces Honorees for the 2021 Sunbeam Award Gala

NORTHEAST HARBOR, ME -- Maine Seacoast Mission President John Zavodny has announced the two honorees for the next summer's Sunbeam Award Gala: Sigma Kappa and Acadia Senior College. The Mission's Sunbeam Award Gala is its centerpiece fundraising event, built around recognizing those who embody the ideals of community.

President Zavodny said the values and accomplishments of these two inspiring organizations are clear examples of actions and spirit that make communities strong. Maine Seacoast Mission is honored to celebrate these two organizations' contributions.

Sigma Kappa, a national sorority was founded in 1874 at Colby College in Waterville, ME, and has been the Mission's friend and partner for over a century. Valuing personal growth, friendship, service and loyalty, the sorority has initiated over 176,000 women nationwide. The purpose of Sigma Kappa is to "provide lifelong opportunities and support for social, intellectual, and spiritual development by bringing women together to positively impact our communities."

Sigma Kappa Foundation is the organization's philanthropic arm, and its mission is to create and fund leadership, scholarship and philanthropic initiatives that reflect the values and spirit of Sigma Kappa Sorority. Sigma Kappa's philanthropic priorities include the Maine Seacoast Mission and gerontology studies with an emphasis on Alzheimer's disease research.

Sigma Kappa, through its Foundation, provides Maine Seacoast Mission with support for several programs including Housing Rehabilitation, Christmas gift program, and Island Services.

"As we approach our 150th anniversary in 2024, we often look to the constants in our membership experience and the Maine Seacoast Mission is among them. It connects us to our roots at Colby College and our founders," shared Dawn O'Connor, Sigma Kappa Foundation president. "To be honored with a Sunbeam Award is humbling and very much appreciated."

Acadia Senior College, located on Mount Desert Island, began as a community project to provide "intellectual stimulation, practical knowledge, social interaction, and fun" for older persons. In 2020, Acadia Senior College is honoring its 20th Anniversary. Acadia Senior College is a place where the knowledge and talents of community members work in service to the region's senior population.

Acadia Senior College offers programming that informs, challenges, entertains, and strengthens community through courses in areas such as economics, ecology, health, opera, and literature. Acadia Senior College also provides fascinating keynote lectures, with coffees and lunches encouraging dialogue on current challenges and issues.

"The Maine Seacoast Mission has been fostering and supporting communities in Maine for many years. On behalf of Acadia Senior College, I am thrilled to be the recipient of this great honor. To be selected for this award acknowledges the vision of our founders to enrich the lives of seniors on MDI and in the surrounding areas", Linda Dunn, President, said.

The Maine Seacoast Mission looks forward to celebrating these two honorees throughout the year. Sigma Kappa and Acadia Senior College join a wonderful list of Sunbeam honorees going back 16 years:

Past Sunbeam Award Gala Recipients

2019 - Bryan Colket and the *Sunbeam* "All Hands on Deck" Committee & Dr. Diehl Snyder and the MDI Hospital Behavioral Health Center

2018 - Marjorie Withers & and Maine Community Foundation, Hancock and Washington County Funds; Stephen Rowe, President

2017- Robin Alden & The Mount Desert Islander (Earl Brechlin and Alan Baker)

2016 – Edward R. Flanagan & Cookie Horner and Jack Russell (Co-Chairs, Acadia Centennial Task Force)

2015 – Joseph M. Murphy & Todd West

2014 - Senator George J. Mitchell

2013 - Charlie Harrington

2012 - Ashley Bryan

2011 - Edith R. Dixon & Ralph W. Stanley

2010 - Emily A. Sabah-Maren & Gary DeLong

2009 - Curtis L. Blake & Marianne Barnicle

2008 - Charlotte Bordeaux & Dr. Richard Dimond

2007 - James Gower & Henry Harris

2006 - Cornelia Greaves Bates & Alf Wakeman

2005 - Ruth and Tristram Colket & Myron Sprague

2004 - Jill Goldthwait & Fritz Dixon

For more information about the event, scheduled for August 12, 2021, please contact Anna Silver at 207.801.6011 or asilver@seacoastmission.org.

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