

United Way of Greater New Bedford's "Live United Celebration" announces community awards

Each year, United Way of Greater New Bedford hosts the Live United Celebration to honor community members, organizations, and businesses that have supported its work in the areas of health, education, financial stability, and basic needs. The celebration was held virtually on June 4th with an award announcement every half hour.

"This year looked a lot different than traditional Live United Celebrations," said Michelle N. Hantman, President & CEO. "But the reasons to celebrate our honorees are the same – they have supported United Way in a big way over the past year and we are truly thankful for their continued support of our work whether it is through giving, advocating, or volunteering."

Acushnet Company received multiple awards including the Navigator Award, Rockefeller Award and the Corporate Excellence Award for their commitment and contributions to United Way over the past year. BankFive, BayCoast Bank, City of New Bedford, Eversource, and Lockheed Martin also received the Rockefeller Award for their successful workplace campaigns and corporate contributions.

Southcoast Health was awarded the Community Spirit Award for their partnership, volunteerism, and ongoing commitment to keeping the region healthy and safe. Over the past year, they have been committed to further engaging their employees in the community and partnering with United Way to make a deeper impact.

Black Tie Cookies and Marlissa Briggett of South Coast Almanac

received Live United awards for demonstrating what it means to Live United by giving, advocating, and volunteering throughout the year.

Our Sisters' School was awarded the Spirit of Volunteerism Award for sharing their time with United Way and other community organizations throughout the year. United Way also honored Vermette Development with the Holiday Spirit Award for raising money for families through the Holiday Wishes program with Fun 107 and United Way.

Sid Wainer & Son was honored with the Hunger Heroes Award for their continuous year round support of United Way's hunger relief initiatives. Their partnership and commitment to the SouthCoast has grown in the past few months when they were awarded a USDA grant to provide 30,000 fresh produce boxes to residents for free from May – August.

The Greater New Bedford Community Health Center received the Community Partner Award. Over the past year, they have been an important United Way partner to ensure vulnerable populations are getting the services they need.

In addition to the corporate awards, United Way honored several individuals for their commitment to United Way and its mission. Maegan Powers was awarded the Women United Outstanding Leadership Award for her outstanding leadership, dedication and commitment to United Way's Women United Initiatives. Chelsey Puza was awarded with the Spirit of Giving Award for donating her time and talent to raise money for United Way's Help United Fund by capturing this unique point in time for families through The Front Steps Project. And Vernon Miles of Milestone Mortgage Solutions was awarded the Community Champion Award for his generous, longstanding support of United Way of Greater New Bedford and many other local community organizations. This year, Milestone innovated by creating a strategic and effective philanthropic approach to support several area nonprofits.

Other volunteers recognized at the event included Loaned Executives, Campaign Cabinet, and this year's Campaign Chair, Bill Eccles, Jr.

"I was honored and proud to serve as the 2019 United Way of Greater New Bedford Campaign Chair. We had a dedicated campaign cabinet, that worked together and achieved success through a team effort," said Eccles, President of BankFive. "Thank you to the campaign cabinet, United Way staff, and the SouthCoast community who have provided their leadership, numerous volunteer hours, and donations to help support United Way's programs."

The Live United Celebration was sponsored by BankFive, Bristol County Savings Bank, and Coastal Financial.

United Way of Greater New Bedford is a non-profit organization that was established in 1953. United Way brings together volunteers, community leaders, and corporate partners to provide quality programs and initiatives that achieve positive results. Its service area, which has a population in excess of 197,000, includes the City of New Bedford and surrounding towns of Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Freetown, Marion, Mattapoisett, Rochester and Wareham.