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2026

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*the*  
JOAN SHAW  
HERMAN

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



“An equal  
mixture of  
good humor  
and sensible  
soft melancholy.”

JOAN SHAW HERMAN QUOTATION REPRINTED  
FROM THE CONCORD ACADEMY YEARBOOK OF 1946



*Photo of Joan Shaw Herman  
reprinted from the 1946  
Concord Academy Yearbook*

## Joan Shaw Herman

*graduated from Concord  
Academy in the spring of 1946*

She planned to start her studies at Wellesley College in the fall and to work hard at the American Friends Service Committee Camp over the summer. That summer she threw herself wholeheartedly into her work, getting up early to dig ditches and cut down trees. Never wanting to waste a minute of living on sleep, Joan stayed up late each night, talking with her fellow workers, and, unfortunately, swimming in a contaminated river. She learned quickly that youth and energy do not grant one immunity from disease; by the end of the summer, polio left Joan Shaw Herman paralyzed from the neck down.

Joan never did attend Wellesley; after checking into New Britain Memorial Hospital for the Chronically Ill in Connecticut, she was rarely able to leave. Perilously close to respiratory failure, she was often confined to her bed by an iron lung. Writing and painting, two of her greatest talents, became frustrated passions as her arms lay limp at her sides. In many ways, it seemed that Joan's promising life was over.

Joan believed, however, that “selfishness and self indulgence are our only true limitations and prisons.” She did not see herself as imprisoned by her physical weakness and the iron lung, but rather, she viewed the world and its opportunities from a new perspective. Deeply religious, Joan used her confinement to study the Bible extensively, finding wisdom and strength in its words. She once wrote to Concord Academy classmate Phyllis Clark Nininger:

**Courage is not the absence of fear. It is the God-given strength to face what we have to face and do what we have to do whether we are afraid or not, remembering Christ’s words, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”**

#### **II CORINTHIANS 12:9**

Joan lived by those words and refused to submit to self pity. Her spirit and attitude were not inhibited by her physical limitations.

Joan’s accomplishments would be impressive regardless of her physical condition. From her hospital bed, she took a correspondence course in journalism and creative writing and in her later years was assistant clinical instructor of nursing in a hospital in Georgia. She dictated letters to friends and typed essays and poetry on her electric typewriter using a stick held between her teeth. Concord Academy published her poems in its bulletins and magazine on several occasions. All of her writings, including essays entitled “Quiet Places” and “We Must Look Around Us in Awareness,” reflect her peace of mind and insightful thoughts.



Most lasting of all Joan's accomplishments was her work for the improvement of the lives of people with disabilities. In 1955, Joan founded New Horizons, a Fellowship Dedicated to Adventurous Living by the Physically Handicapped. Later she would become vice president of the board and editor of publications. Joan and her disabled colleagues planned and executed a program designed to aid individuals with disabilities in leading challenging, productive, and dynamic lives. Cooperative work and artistic pursuits eventually led to a virtually independent living community managed and run mostly by disabled people. New Horizons continues to flourish, thanks in large part to Joan's organization, persistence, and hard work.

*"Christmastide" was painted by Joan Shaw Herman '46 and copied from a color photo taken by Elizabeth Wheeler. It was painted with a brush held in her teeth and was begun March 1959 and finished October 1960.*

*A plaque with the names of each Joan Shaw Herman Award recipient hangs in the Elizabeth B. Hall Chapel under Joan's painting.*

*I can do all things in Him who strengthens me (PHILIPPIANS 4:13).*

Joan, and New Horizons, maintained a mutually inspiring correspondence with Concord Academy. Joan wrote to invite the CA girls to visit Memorial Hospital, hoping they would learn about her cause. Headmistress Elizabeth B. Hall was one of the principal benefactors of the program, donating both from her own pocket and from the Sunday Vespers collection. Mrs. Hall encouraged Joan's efforts, but was cautious about her girls' roles in Joan's project; she did not want them to feel overwhelmed by volunteer responsibility at such a young age and over such a long distance. Still, she wrote to request Joan's compositions for CA publications and hoped that non-working visits from "the girls" would keep Joan in contact with other young people and the school. She did keep in touch until her death in 1975, at which point Joan's family and friends were not sure how best to grieve and honor this inspiring woman.

A year later, the executive committee of the Alumnae/i Association found a way for Joan to continue to be a part of the CA community.

**They created an award to be given to an alumna or alumnus in recognition of service to others**

*and named Joan the first recipient.*

The original citation states that the committee "has agreed that in order to establish the criteria for the giving of this award, it will, hereafter, be known as the Joan Shaw Herman Distinguished Service Award."

A later description further details that “the committee deliberately refrained from defining the distinguished service except to agree that this was not an award for service to Concord Academy. Thus the awardee could be anyone, of any age...” The criteria for the award were otherwise left undefined.

Nevertheless, Concord Academy’s Alumnae/i Association has chosen many outstanding recipients since the inception of the Joan Shaw Herman Award. Over time, the accomplishments, energy, courage, and service of each recipient have themselves become informal criteria in considering new nominations. Also, the manner in which recipients of the Joan Shaw Herman award have been able to offer service has been shifting. Ruth Brooks Drinker ’31 mentioned in her acceptance speech in 1979 that volunteers are an endangered species. There are, however, more professional careers today than ever before whose goals are to improve the lives of people, whether on an emotional, physical, or socioeconomic level. Therefore, one’s professional work can be a vehicle for offering service to others, in the same way as many of the early recipients of the Joan Shaw Herman Award served others in a volunteer capacity.

**The existence of the Joan Shaw Herman Award, in a community that does not bestow any other award, is testament to a common value shared by the Concord Academy community. The list of alumnae/i who have received this award for service to others inspires each of us to lead productive lives as committed citizens.**

*Introduction written by Rachel McColl '91*



*the*  
**Award**

## **The first Joan Shaw Herman Distinguished Service Award was bestowed posthumously to Joan Shaw Herman herself in 1976.**

Although there was a break in granting the award between the years of 1989 and 1994, nominations currently are solicited each year from all classes. All nominations are then added to a database of alumnae/i to be considered during the nominating process each year. Many times the Joan Shaw Herman Award Committee solicits further information from the classmate, friend, or relative who has nominated an alumna/us for the award, and special consideration is given to alumnae/i who are celebrating major reunions so that their classmates can be present when they receive the award and speak about their work during reunion weekend. On occasion, the Joan Shaw Herman recipient has returned to Concord Academy to speak to current students, thereby showcasing the power of service.



*the*  
Recipients



Elizabeth Monroe Boggs '31  
Margaret Lincoln Marshall '31  
Ruth Brooks Drinker '31  
Cynthia Creelman Hill '50  
Doreen Young  
Helen Whiting Livingston '41  
Rosemary Baldwin Coffin '40  
Ann McKinstry Micou '48  
Betsy Atwood Nelson '55  
Wendy Arnold '65  
Sarah Foss '41  
Marteen A. Poole '58  
Adelaide Eicks Comegys '48  
Her Majesty Queen Noor '69  
Deborah Ham '55  
Corinne Benson Johnson '46  
Jody Heymann '77  
Angela Middleton Wilkins '48  
Bronwen Jenney Anders '59  
Nellie Davidson '55  
Annie Wilson '75  
Victoria Post Ranney '56  
Katharine Muller Bullitt '42  
Phyllis Rothschild Farley '42  
Anne GaudTinker '63  
Nancy Read Coville '49  
Paul Santomena '85  
Nancy Jaicks Alexander '51  
Ellen Smith Harde '62  
Jennifer Moulton '67  
Tom Lincoln '78  
Robin Alden '69  
Sharmin Eshraghi Bock '80  
Sandra Willett Jackson '61  
Lyn Burr Brignoli '62  
Catherine Saalfield Gund '83  
Kate Morse Erwin '69  
Leslie Davidson '66  
Ingrid Walker-Descartes '91  
Adnan Zubcevic '75  
Chris Rosenberg '86  
Richard Read '75  
Leslie Taylor Davol '87 and  
Sam Davol '88

# Elizabeth Monroe Boggs '31 Margaret Lincoln Marshall '31

*1978 Recipients*

**The first recipients after Joan Shaw Herman herself, they both devoted their skills to better the lives of Americans with intellectual and developmental disabilities.**

Elizabeth Boggs was a member of the National Council for the Handicapped, working to establish policies for the National Institute of Handicapped Research. She served on the board of the National Association for Retarded Citizens (now the Arc) and on the New Jersey Disability Council.

Her extensive research earned her a position on the Technical Consultant Panel for the National Center for Health Statistics. Elizabeth was the first woman ever to sit as president of the National Association for Retarded Children (now the Arc), from 1958 to 1960.

In 1971 she was awarded the prestigious Kennedy International Award for Outstanding Leadership in the Field of Mental Retardation. Elizabeth wrote and spoke extensively on the necessity for more research on intellectual and developmental disability to spread awareness and educate the public.

Margaret Marshall worked to establish the Mothers' Mutual Program to support families like her own. She was incorporator of Cheyenne Village, a community for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Appointed to the Governor's Statewide Planning Study Advisory Committee on Rehabilitation and the Colorado State Board of Social Services, she used her positions to improve the lives of intellectually disabled people like her son, who had been institutionalized.

Margaret spoke extensively — including at a CA assembly in 1979 — about the need for the mentally sufficient majority to appreciate the abilities of those with disabilities, to realize that many have “unused talents” and an “unrecognized capacity for helping themselves and others.” She argued that giving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities more responsibility and training could prepare many to lead more fulfilling, independent lives.

## Ruth Brooks Drinker '31

*1979 Recipient*

**Received the award for her work to provide education for children and adults alike, and to improve the well-being of women and the poor.**

A teacher at the Brooks School for 18 years, she found time outside of her job and family to be an active volunteer. When she was not teaching, she led a Girl Scout troop.

During World War II, she started a Planned Parenthood office in Englewood, N.J. She established a daycare center to aid poor, black working mothers in the same neighborhood. She was one of the founders of the Nashoba Brooks School of Concord and served on the boards of trustees of Concord Academy, Brooks School, and Nashoba Brooks.

In Concord she sat on the Human Rights Council and organized the Emerson Hospital Rummage Sale for three years. Ruth was secretary and then chair of Concord-Carlisle Adult and Continuing Education for 12 years.

## Cynthia Creelman Hill '50

*1980 Recipient*

**Received the award for her work with the Inuit and Native American communities in the Canadian Arctic.**

In 1979, Cynthia became mayor of Inuvik, an economically depressed town in the Canadian Arctic. She worked to improve the quality of life in this Inuit, Native American, and white community by “educating the Northerners and helping them participate in the changes caused by rapid growth, and also being a spokesperson for them within and outside of the area,” according to the award citation. She helped to fight elevated prices and alcoholism.

As Inuvik’s supervisor of continuing education from 1967, she improved adult education in the area. In addition, Cynthia served as regional vice president and later executive vice president of the Northwest Territories Public Service Alliance. Her work to claim the economic benefits of oil and gas recently found in the area earned her a position in the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements.

## Doreen Young

*1982 Recipient*

**The second recipient after Joan to receive the award posthumously and the only who was not a graduate of Concord Academy.**

She was, however, a most beloved teacher of English and art history for 17 years and academic assistant headmistress for much of that time. Elizabeth Hall's close friend, she discovered the New Hampshire church that was to become the CA Chapel and later followed Mrs. Hall to help found Simon's Rock College.

During World War II, Doreen worked for the Red Cross, first on a hospital ship off the coast of Normandy, and then as a clubmobiler traveling with General Patton's 20th Corps to Czechoslovakia. She served on the Carlisle School Committee, where she played a significant role in establishing the Carlisle schools and Concord-Carlisle Regional High School. She served as a docent and lecturer at both the National Gallery of Fine Arts in Washington, D.C., and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

## Helen Whiting Livingston '41

*1984 Recipient*

**Received the award for her work in fighting Alzheimer's disease.**

Her husband, Putnam, was diagnosed with the disease in 1977. While constantly coaching her husband, stimulating his memory, and helping him to maintain high expectations for himself, she started two groups in New Hampshire to support families who are dealing with the difficulties of caring for a family member with Alzheimer's.

Helen served as president in 1972 of the Union County Voluntary Action Center, as a United Way board member and vice president, and as trustee of the Monadnock Community Day Care Center. She advocated with lawmakers in Congress and the House and Senate Committee on Aging to increase the rights of victims of the disease, who were at the time excluded from Medicare or private insurance coverage for treatment.

## Rosemary Baldwin Coffin '40

*1985 Recipient*

**Received the award three years after being named the New Hampshire Citizen of the Year by the New Hampshire Association of Social Workers.**

An active participant in many organizations, Rosemary was President of the local PTA and the Town Players and helped to develop Child and Family Services. In 1979, Rosemary founded New Hampshire's Seacoast Hospice — a constructive reaction to her own father's struggle with cancer. The state's first facility devoted to caring not only for the chronically ill but the emotional needs of the patients' families, it led to the establishment of the Hospice Affiliates of New Hampshire, which built a series of similar facilities.

When she was given the award in 1985, Rosemary had been working for 10 years to build, as she said, a "life care facility for elderly who want to be independent yet in a community, where their needs will be taken care of."

## Ann McKinstry Micou '48

*1988 Recipient*

**Received the award for her work to improve education in poor and oppressed communities.**

For many years she worked for World Education, pursuing educational opportunities for low-income adults. Ann worked for a small agency that encouraged "functional education and family life planning for poor and illiterate adults," as she wrote to Concord Academy in 1974.

Later she was director of communications for the United States Council for International Business. At the time she received the award, Ann was director of the Information Exchange, South African Programs. She spent three months of each year in South Africa, visiting universities and homelands, working to gather information on South African education in order to assist its development.

## Betsy Atwood Nelson '55

*1994 Recipient*

**Received the award for her commitment to community service focusing on education, social work, and urban issues.**

She has worked on behalf of private and public schools, serving as a trustee of Concord Academy, the Fenn School, Nashoba Brooks School, the Landmark School, and Boston Children's Services. As president of the board of trustees of Nashoba Country Day School, she managed the merger with the Brooks School of Concord. Her involvement with the Boston Public Schools included heading up the School Volunteer Program, now called School Partners in Education.

Betsy served as president of the national board of School Partners in Education and as a member of the international board. She helped develop a direct partnership between business and schools, creating innovative mentoring opportunities for students, administrators, and business leaders.

## Wendy Arnold '65

*1995 Recipient*

**Received the award for her work to improve the health of youth all over the world and has worked tirelessly on their behalf.**

She is the director and founder of the Peer Education Program of Los Angeles (PEP/LA), a nonprofit organization devoted to AIDS prevention in adolescents. The organization is founded on the principle that the best way to reach teens is to have other teens talk to them.

She is deeply committed to stopping the spread of AIDS among teens and educating teenagers about AIDS. PEP/LA trains teen peer educators, who provide an opportunity for other teens to communicate with them about sensitive issues and receive accurate information about sex and AIDS. Wendy's educational outreach included organizing a peer education program at Concord Academy.

## Sarah Foss '41

*1996 Recipient*

**Received the award for her courage in recognizing the need to help children with learning disabilities in her home state of Vermont.**

Through her personal goals of acting to improve conditions of those less fortunate and of bringing compassion and change to the status quo, she worked to establish an appropriate educational program for children with learning disabilities.

Sally also spent two years in the Czech Republic as the country was struggling to develop its own government and services, helping to teach English to young people. Through personal contact with a Czech refugee she learned of the need for someone to teach English, and she responded with her boundless energy and adventuresome spirit.

## Marten A. Poole '58

*1997 Recipient*

**Received the award posthumously after dying of cancer. She spent the last 13 years of her life at the Denver Children's Hospital, working with pediatric oncology patients.**

Two of those years she was dying yet she continued to visit the children and show them that their friend Marty was just like them. She worked on several cancer research projects, including new catheters to make the frequent injections more bearable for children.

Like Joan Shaw Herman, she was not dominated by her illness, instead transforming the lives of others through her remarkable personal outreach and warmth. She also raised funds and donated personally to pediatric oncology research at Denver Children's Hospital.

## Adelaide Eicks Comegys '48

*1998 Recipient*

**Earned the award for her work helping children with disabilities realize their full potential.**

Her love and commitment to her seriously disabled younger daughter Kate was the impetus for Addie's desire to provide children facing similar challenges with options other than being institutionalized. Her leadership in making a life for Kate, and thereby advocating for and identifying ways for other families to meet the needs of their children with disabilities, has been felt at the local, state, and national level.

She was the first parent elected to serve on the board of directors of The Association for Persons with Severe Disabilities (TASH), and she co-founded the New England chapter of TASH. She has been a pioneer in promoting the concepts of inclusion, mainstreaming, and supported employment for individuals with disabilities.

## Her Majesty Queen Noor '69

*1999 Recipient*

**Received the award in recognition of her dedication to humanitarian efforts around the world, especially for women and children.**

Under her leadership, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation seeks to preserve and enrich Jordan's unique cultural identity and values. Queen Noor has championed internationally successful projects by stressing self-reliance and community involvement in five areas: family and community development, mother and child welfare, enhancement of culture and heritage, and advancement of education.

She continues to promote environmental awareness and is a tireless advocate for the international fight to ban landmines.

## Deborah Ham '55

*2000 Recipient*

**Received the award posthumously. Before becoming a lawyer, Deborah was an English teacher and a VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) volunteer, assigned to the Pima County Legal Aid Society in Tucson, Arizona.**

After opening her own law practice in 1980, she spent her entire professional career helping the underprivileged and those who without her help could not seek justice.

Globe, a small mining town of 9,000 in the mountains east of Phoenix, and Russell's Gulch, where she lived without benefit of electricity or running water, were the center of Deborah's world. In the early 1990s, she agreed to represent a small group of citizens who were challenging the Carlotta Mining Company's efforts to develop a copper mine at Pinto Creek, in a nearby mountain range. She represented them without fee right up to the very hour of her sudden death on May 18, 1998.

## Corinne Benson Johnson '46

*2001 Recipient*

**For close to 45 years, Corinne worked for the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), whose work is based on the Quaker belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.**

Corinne was involved in programs involving relief, development, training, education, and reconciliation in more than 30 countries around the world. She was responsible for all of the organization's family planning and population education programs in Latin America. In 1973 she became the director of Latin American programs, and from the late 1970s to the mid-1990s Corinne provided extraordinary leadership to the international work of AFSC as their director of international programs.

She promoted fresh approaches to small-scale economic development with a focus on strengthening capacities within local communities, leading to the building of peaceful, civil societies.

## Jody Heymann '77

*2002 Recipient*

**Both professionally and as a volunteer, Jody has dedicated herself to helping others.**

After graduating from Yale University, Jody served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Tanzania and, after completing Harvard Medical School, was a volunteer in Gabon.

She is the author of one of the earliest studies forecasting the impact of the AIDS epidemic in Africa and was one of the first to suggest tiered pricing in order to make AIDS medications available to developing nations.

The first book Jody published, *Equal Partners: a Physician's Call for a New Spirit of Medicine*, draws on her own experience as a patient. She advocates changes in the practice of modern medicine to foster cooperation and understanding between physicians and patients. She argues that "medical students and doctors must learn from patients not only how the body hurts, but also how one's family, one's income, one's ability to work, drive or walk, one's very soul can hurt and then what doctors and caregivers must do to relieve that pain."

## Angela Middleton Wilkins '48

*2003 Recipient*

**Received the award for her lifelong dedication to teaching children with dyslexia and other learning challenges.**

Over the course of 30 years, she developed teaching methods and curricula to train classroom teachers, as well as specialists, in the Orton-Gillingham approach.

In addition, she was the founding director, in 1974, of the Carroll School's own Garside Institute for Teacher Training, an outreach program which has trained thousands of public and private school teachers. Angie also has served as vice president of the board of directors of the Learning Disabilities Network, has been involved with the National Dyslexia Association for over 10 years, and has been an adjunct faculty member at Lesley College.

Angie has presented at various conferences around the globe for more than 15 years, including both the Hawaii and the New York branches of the Orton Dyslexia Society, the Bermuda Conference on Learning Differences, and the British Dyslexia Society at Oxford, England. She was the 1992 recipient of the Alice Garside Award from the New England Branch of the Orton Dyslexia Society.

## Bronwen Jenney Anders '59

*2004 Recipient*

**Bron's impressive credentials as a pediatrician demonstrate her commitment to community health care in medically underserved populations, including Native Americans and pediatric tuberculosis patients.**

In 2003, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) honored her with a national award for her services. The AAP cited that, "Bronwen demonstrated the ultimate in the blending of pediatric skill, concern for patients and community, and delivery of service to the underserved." In 1983, she began a clinic for community health care. This effort expanded to three sites. As clinical professor at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine, she incorporated clinical training at these sites for the resident doctors.

Her passion to serve extended to mentoring others to serve. The summer before her senior year at CA, Bron was a courier for Frontier Nursing Service in Kentucky, where she decided to become a doctor for indigent populations.

Even then she saw the great need for doctors to listen to and empathize with patients. Later, as a physician, she worked with rural outpatients in Malaysia and served as a Peace Corps physician in Paraguay. Among numerous honors and awards, the AAP's Community Access to Child Health (CATCH) program awarded her grants for pediatric tuberculosis research. She was appointed CATCH Facilitator for the entire state of California. The Center for Disease Control awarded her and colleagues a \$1 million grant for pediatric tuberculosis research. Over the years, Bron also continued to volunteer her services in Ghana, Mexico City, and on Native American reservations.

## Nellie Davidson '55

*2005 Recipient*

**Was the fourth recipient after Joan herself to receive the award posthumously and was recognized for her passion for helping others.**

As a registered nurse, Nellie provided medical care, support, and referral services for thousands of homeless individuals in the Pittsburgh area for over 35 years.

In 1992, she helped start an outreach program for Pittsburgh's transient and homeless population, organizing 14 teams of formerly homeless people and clinical volunteers to perform medical rounds on the city's streets, seeking people out in abandoned buildings and drug dens. In 1995 she won the Pittsburgh Mercy Health System's Sam Brunette Award for a lifetime of service to the poor, homeless, and disadvantaged.

## Annie Wilson '75

*2005 Recipient*

**As Executive Vice President of the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Annie has been a leader in a national agency committed to "service and justice for the most vulnerable of new-comers" to the United States.**

Annie was honored for her more than twenty years of experience helping refugees and immigrants, including her work overseeing the domestic refugee resettlement network of the Church World Service Immigration and Refugee Program, and eight years directing the Asylum Concerns Program for LIRS.

Annie played a leadership role in establishing and coordinating a national service and advocacy coalition, the Detention Watch Network, now over 100 organizations strong.

## Victoria Post Ranney '56

*2006 Recipient*

**Vicky has exemplified a life of commitment to service.**

From her early years' work teaching in a village in Uganda to her commitment to the civil rights movement, her involvement in integration, and her dedication to environmental issues, the breadth and depth of Vicky's social consciousness and contributions are admirable.

Most recently, Vicky's effort to create a development in the Chicago area that encompasses her ideals has been phenomenally successful. Together with her husband, she has developed a planned community, Prairie Crossing in Grayslake, Illinois, that actively promotes the principles of environmental protection, energy conservation, and racial and economic diversity.

Prairie Crossing has won accolades from media across the country for its innovative design and devotion to the ideals that Vicky holds so dear. She has been instrumental in guiding the development, which includes an organic farm, a charter school, and architecture that reflects the history of the area. It has been noted for the sense of 'Americana' and community it exudes.

## Katharine Muller Bullitt '42

*2007 Recipient*

**Received the award for her lifelong dedication to social activism. In her work as a volunteer and a board member, she has addressed issues from civil rights, quality integrated education, women's rights, and environmental protection to peace and international understanding.**

An early advocate of public education and desegregation, Kay organized a voluntary racial-transfer program between elementary schools in Seattle in 1968. Seattle has since been described as the largest city in the United States to voluntarily desegregate its school system. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Kay either founded or served on the steering committees of multiple organizations working on behalf of civil rights and women's rights. In 1976, at a time when it was difficult for individual women to secure a loan, Kay helped found a women's bank, the Sound Savings and Loan, where she was a director for 10 years.

Concerned with international relations, Kay has served on many boards and committees working for peace throughout the world. As a trustee of the Bullitt Foundation, Kay also has worked to promote environmental protection of the Pacific Northwest.

She has supported the arts in Seattle as chair of the executive committee for the Seattle Arts Festival and through her work on the board of the Northwest Chamber Orchestra. Kay remains committed to leadership development for underprivileged children and is involved with OneWorldNow!, a program that promotes tolerance and gives economically disadvantaged young people the opportunity to learn language and leadership skills and to increase their understanding of other cultures.

## Phyllis Rothschild Farley '42

*2007 Recipient*

**Received the award for her efforts pioneering programs that offer choice, comfort, and care for those entering and departing this world.**

Phyllis progressed from her role as a volunteer teaching labor preparation to chair of the board of the Maternity Center Association (MCA) in New York City. In her work there, she instituted the Childbearing Center, the first of its kind to offer midwife-assisted births in a non-hospital setting. Her fearless conviction that this model of maternity care could return the process of birth to families had a revolutionary impact on maternity care in and out of hospitals and opened the door for the many childbirth options that we now take for granted.

Through her work with mothers-to-be, Phyllis was introduced to the use of doulas, advocates who attend the birth and help with newborn care. Phyllis imagined that the doula model could be equally helpful in easing end-of-life issues by bringing “empathy, compassion, common sense, a sense of humor, and an ability to advocate.” She developed a syllabus and training program called Doula to Accompany and Comfort, which is used to train volunteers throughout the United States.

Phyllis continues to work as a doula herself, providing the individual care that she advocates to the larger medical community. Phyllis has also been consistent in her support of education throughout her life: not only did she chair of the board of Sarah Lawrence College, but she also served on the board of the U.S. Commission for United World Colleges (UWC), a group of international high schools founded during the Cold War to promote mutual understanding among young people of different ethnic backgrounds and religions.

## Anne Gaud Tinker '63

*2008 Recipient*

**Recognized shortly after retiring as director of the Saving Newborn Lives Initiative, for her tireless work over three decades toward improving health care for women and children in the poorest countries around the world.**

Anne began her career in a staff position on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, then became division chief at USAID, and lead health specialist for the World Bank. In the Saving Newborn Lives Initiative, jointly developed by Save the Children and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Anne continued her life's work through advocacy, action research, and field programs to reduce newborn and maternal mortality in 18 developing countries.

She continues to lend her expertise part-time as a senior advisor at Save the Children and a member of the board of directors of the global Partnership for Maternal Newborn and Child Health, hosted by the World Health Organization. Anne's many admirable personal traits — inner strength, confidence, commitment, and a self-effacing manner — are qualities that the Joan Shaw Herman Award was created to celebrate.

## Nancy Read Coville '49

*2009 Recipient*

**Received the award in honor of her abiding passion to educate and enrich the lives of children in Tamworth, N.H.**

As a charter member of the Tamworth Arts Council, Nancy served on the committee that founded a summer day camp in the 1960s called the Summer Enrichment Program, where Nancy's tireless energy and enthusiasm infected adults and children alike.

The program is still active under the Tamworth Recreation Department and funded by the town, providing residents with summertime memories of climbing mountains, playing sports, putting on plays, and making friends.

A few years after starting the Summer Enrichment Program, Nancy established the Bearcamp Valley School and Childcare Center (BVS & CC), where she continues offering innovative programs for children.

BVS & CC is currently the only licensed full-time child care center in Tamworth, open 12 hours a day, five days a week, all year round. In the rural area of Tamworth, many families need assistance for this kind of care. Nancy raises money to support her school and tries to make it possible for any child to be able to attend.

Since founding the school, she has been a committed administrator, fundraiser, and its heart and soul. One of Nancy's nominators noted that Nancy "made a tremendous difference locally over a lifetime in her area" and is continuing to work in her "quiet but wonderful way."

## Paul Santomenna '85

*2010 Recipient*

**Received the award in recognition of his commitment to addressing societal challenges through the creative use of media.**

Early in his career, Paul made a purposeful decision to apply his talents in service to others. After receiving an MFA in film from CalArts in 1994, he moved to Arizona to work with adolescent members of the White Mountain Apache Tribe. Paul and his students produced radio and television public service announcements for the Tribe's substance abuse prevention initiative. In 1997, he became director of Media Programs at Johns Hopkins University's Center for American Indian Health, producing social marketing campaigns to support public health initiatives on Native American reservations around the country.

The Open Society Institute-Baltimore awarded Paul a fellowship in 2002 to establish Megaphone Project, a nonprofit that produces low-cost advocacy films for social justice campaigns in Maryland. In creating Megaphone Project, Paul shifted from helping institutions change individual behavior to helping individuals change institutional behavior. In 2008, Paul moved to Maine to be closer to family. He serves as executive director of Maine Physicians for Social Responsibility and is establishing a new entity that will produce films in support of the U.S.'s most marginalized populations.

## Nancy Jaicks Alexander '51

*2011 Recipient*

**Was a member of Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross' international teaching and workshop staff in 1985 when Dr. Ross, the founder of the hospice movement, asked her to provide volunteer counseling services to prison inmates who had been diagnosed with AIDS.**

Nancy accepted this challenge, undeterred by the pervasive fear and paranoia surrounding this deadly disease and despite the fact that little was known about how it was transmitted. Together with her husband, a retired architect, she made the 50-mile trip weekly to volunteer at the California Medical Facility at Vacaville, counseling prison inmates who faced virtual isolation and certain death after their diagnoses.

After several years of providing volunteer counseling to inmates and putting into action the belief that "no man should die alone in prison," Nancy was instrumental in co-founding the first prison hospice in the world in 1991, training inmate volunteers in hospice counseling.

The prison hospice facility, now with 17 beds and fully accredited with 40 inmate volunteers, is named for Nancy's late husband, Robert Evans Alexander, who died in 1992 and was her partner in establishing the program. When she retired in 2010, after volunteering for 25 years, she also left as a legacy plans for a prison hospice garden, planned at no cost to the state of California, and awaiting private funding to be installed. Her courage and commitment have helped to create, in her own words, "an island of compassion in a sea of violence, fear, and paranoia."

## Ellen Smith Harde '62

*2012 Recipient*

**Was a recipient of the award in recognition of her commitment and many contributions to her local community. Since moving to Westford, Mass., in 1967, Ellen has helped to found a number of Westford institutions, including the local League of Women Voters, the Roudenbush Community Center, and the Westford Directory.**

She also held town government positions as the first woman selectman, chair of the Westford Recycling Commission, and member of the Westford Land Preservation Foundation. She has volunteered to restore the town common, and, with the publication of three books, is an unofficial town historian.

While Ellen has worn many hats, her most visible role is that of Westford Town Moderator. As in many New England towns, town meeting (the legislative branch of Westford's government) is open to all registered voters, who have the right to speak and vote on an annual budget and local statutes.

Ellen is effective and respected in this position, possessing a special combination of skills — teacher, mediator, and leader — that have led to her election without opposition every term since 1993.

The tireless work of volunteers such as Ellen ensures that local government is stronger and more vibrant and makes a town such as Westford a special place to live.

## Jennifer Moulton '67

*2012 Recipient*

**Received the award posthumously in honor of her work as the planning director for Denver.**

“You didn’t know you came to make a city” reads a quote from Denver poet Thomas Hornsby Ferril, which is imprinted on a memorial to Jennifer in Denver’s municipal building. Arriving in Colorado after leaving Concord Academy, Jennifer graduated with honors from Colorado College and earned an architecture degree from the University of Colorado in Denver, where she was awarded the prestigious AIA School Medal for Excellence in Architecture.

In 1991 she accepted the position of Denver’s planning director and led a development renaissance in the city that would continue over the next decade. Jennifer’s persistence, professionalism, and negotiation skills were invaluable in mediating between competing interests and bringing projects to completion.

She took a lead role in expanding the Denver Art Museum and Denver Library; redeveloping Lowry Air Force Base, Stapleton Airport, and Saint Luke’s Hospital; rebuilding and updating of some of the city’s deteriorating public housing projects; and constructing the Webb Municipal Building. She was a driving force behind *Blueprint Denver: An Integrated Land Use and Transportation Plan*, even as she battled amyloidosis, a rare blood disease, which led to her untimely death in 2003. Her impact on the city, however, is still celebrated.

In 2011, commissioned by the Denver Art Museum, sculptor Joel Shapiro installed a piece “For Jennifer” in her honor outside the Clyfford Still Museum.

## Tom Lincoln '78

*2013 Recipient*

**Received the award for his dedication to community-based healthcare, including coordinated care for incarcerated individuals, one of the most challenging communities in public health.**

For over two decades, his work as practitioner, teacher, and researcher has advanced correctional health care by focusing on the benefits of a coordinated approach between community health centers and jails.

With specializations in HIV, addiction, and general internal medicine, Tom is highly respected for his work demonstrating the success of community-oriented approaches to correctional health care, which has been modeled nationwide. His research has shown how coordination between medical professionals assists the incarcerated population — through treating addiction, preventing the spread of disease, and helping to decrease recidivism — and provides benefits to the surrounding communities through cost savings, improved public health, and increased public safety.

Tom is a respected physician in the Baystate Brightwood Health Center/ Centro de Salud and medical director of the Corrections & Community Health Program at Hampden County Correctional Center. He has also won several teaching awards as an assistant professor of medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine and adjunct faculty member at Springfield College.

## Robin Alden '69

*2014 Recipient*

### **Received the award in recognition of her long-standing service to the fishing communities of Eastern Maine.**

Throughout her career, she has sought to preserve and promote a community-based approach to coastal fishery resource management along a 150-mile region from the islands of Penobscot Bay to the Canadian border. She describes her work as “driven by the observation that fishing is the perfect meeting of environment and economics: If it is done right, it can sustain communities forever.”

Robin's leadership spans nonprofit, government, and publishing organizations. She is currently the executive director of Penobscot East Resource Center, a nonprofit organization she co-founded in 2003 to secure a sustainable future for fisheries and fishing communities in eastern Maine and beyond. Robin served as Maine Commissioner of Marine Resources from 1995 to 1997, responsible for Maine's marine and anadromous fishery management and enforcement as well as for aquaculture in the state.

For 20 years she was publisher and editor of Commercial Fisheries News, a regional fishing trade newspaper that she founded in 1973. Later, Robin became publisher and editor of the company's new publication, Fish Farming News.

Robin was instrumental in starting the annual Maine Fishermen's Forum in the mid-1970s and was a public member of the New England Fishery Management Council from 1979 to 1982 and again during her tenure as commissioner. She was a member of the National Sea Grant Review Panel from 2000 to 2009. Her awards include the Visionary Award for the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment (1997) and the Maine Initiatives Social Landscape Artist Award (2007) with her husband, Ted Ames. Robin has a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Maine and lives in Stonington.

## Sharmin Eshraghi Bock '80

*2015 Recipient*

**Received the award for her commitment to prosecuting human traffickers and creating a support system for the girls and young women they exploit.**

She joined the Alameda County District Attorney's Office in 1989 after serving as a law clerk in the Northern District of California. As a 26-year veteran prosecutor in California, Sharmin is considered a pioneer and national leader who has shown that human trafficking is modern-day slavery and that exploited minors should be identified as victims of child abuse rather than as criminals.

Sharmin wrote Proposition 35, which after getting on the state ballot in California, passed by a historic landslide margin. This is now the toughest anti-human trafficking law in the U.S. In 2005, she started the H.E.A.T. (Human Exploitation and Trafficking) Unit, which is the first program of its kind in the country dedicated to prosecuting traffickers and rescuing victims. Sharmin was the recipient of the Fay Stender Award by the California Women Lawyers in 2009 for her commitment to advocate for disadvantaged people, and she was named Woman of the Year by the California State Legislature in 2010.

In 2008, the Oakland Tribune characterized her as an "arsenal of compassion," who is "leading a statewide charge to spare teenage prostitutes and jail their pimps." As a DNA expert, Sharmin has used DNA technology and forensic evidence to investigate and solve cold-case murders and rapes. She continues to advocate for those whose voices are not heard and to create programs to empower victimized young women. Sharmin started a company called Paddock Cakes, which is now national. The proceeds help fund a boarding school and other therapeutic programs for victims of child sex trafficking.

# Sandra Willett Jackson '61

*2016 Recipient*

**Received the award for her 30 years of intercultural management and leadership experience in the government, business, and nonprofit sectors.**

She has devoted her career to creating economic and social opportunities for underrepresented populations throughout the United States and around the world, specifically for women and children in former USSR countries and Vietnam.

Sandra began her leadership on issues of corporate social responsibility in the 1970s as the executive director of the National Consumers League. She was a Peace Corps director in Hungary from 1992 to 1995. Sandra served as the special representative for commercial and business affairs — an ambassador-level position — in the U.S. Department of State from 1998 to 2001. In that role, she integrated business and consumer perspectives into foreign policy, conducted commercial diplomacy, and conveyed foreign policy concerns to the U.S. business community.

As the president of Vital Voices Global Partnership from 2002 to 2005, she led this international organization in supporting emerging women leaders in economic development, political reform, and human rights. Previously, Sandra spent 10 years as the vice president for consumer affairs at John Hancock in Boston. As co-founder and principal of Strategies & Structures International, Sandra provides consulting services currently on a pro bono basis to women's organizations. Sandra has remained engaged as a community volunteer throughout her career, including serving as a member on several NGO boards. She remains a mentor to young women in the U.S., Azerbaijan, Ecuador, and Yemen.

## Lyn Burr Brignoli '62

*2017 Recipient*

**Received the award in recognition of her sustained personal efforts on behalf of education both locally and internationally.**

A volunteer teacher for children with Down syndrome and other special needs in her Connecticut community, she received a Fulbright award from Yale University in 2000 to travel to Ghana with a group of 12 traditional classroom teachers.

Following that initial trip, Lyn has returned to the country twice to undertake work on a girls' education initiative. She has concentrated on making a difference for young girls in the community by encouraging their efforts towards literacy as well as higher education. In recognition of those efforts, and as thanks for her work in advocating education for girls, the local paramount chief named her Queen of Development.

"Positive change flows from a human connection," Lyn says.

"I know mothers of disabled children in Greenwich, Conn., where I live, and then I met a mother in Ghana. While they come from different cultures and live in very different worlds, I realized they understood each other. It was a spiritual experience. It shows that the human spirit goes beyond any religion, culture, or nation."

Lyn believes her experience could provide a model for aid to developing countries. Individuals with open hearts and minds who make direct personal connections and follow up with modest, sustained financial contributions can help local individuals enact the priorities they determine for their communities. Lyn's work is a powerful reminder that the correct answer to the question, "Should we act locally or globally?" is "Both."

## Catherine Saalfield Gund '83

*2018 Recipient*

**Received the award for her service to marginalized communities — and to all of us who come to understand complex issues more clearly — through her art and activism.**

Cat is the founder and director of Aubin Pictures and an Emmy-nominated producer, director, writer, and activist. Her media work focuses on strategic and sustainable social transformation, arts and culture, HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, and the environment. Her films have screened around the world in festivals, theaters, museums, and schools, and on PBS, the Discovery Channel, and the Sundance Channel.

Cat currently serves on several boards, including Art For Justice, Art Matters, and The George Gund Foundation. She co-founded the Third Wave Foundation, which supports young women and transgender youth, and DIVA TV, an affinity group of ACT UP/NY. She was the founding director of BENT TV, the video workshop for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth.

She was on the founding boards of Bard Early Colleges, Iris House, Working Films, Reality Dance Company, and The Sister Fund, and she has also served MediaRights.org, The Robeson Fund of the Funding Exchange, The Vera List Center for Art and Politics at the New School, and the Astraea Foundation.

Through her art, Cat strives to inspire empathy and awareness surrounding social justice issues in order to serve, support, and advance the lives of others. Her work exemplifies how impactful art with a social justice mission can be.

## Kate Morse Erwin '69

*2019 Recipient*

### **Received the award for her work in forensic psychiatry and with at-risk youth.**

After residency training in general and child and adolescent psychiatry, Kate worked for correctional institutions in Pennsylvania, and later in her career divided her work as an assistant professor of psychiatry and pediatrics at UMass Memorial Medical Center in Worcester and in private practice in forensic psychiatry. At UMass Memorial, Kate evaluated medically ill children with psychiatric difficulties and planned their treatment. In her private forensics practice, she is often called as an expert witness when a criminal defendant's future is at stake, offering her judgment about whether or not that individual can be held criminally responsible.

Kate has spent much of the past 30 years counseling individuals in the prison system, with a particular focus on those serving the longest sentences. Her passion for improving mental health for the incarcerated is rare and unparalleled.

## Anne Pfitzer '85

*2020 Recipient*

**Received the award for her contributions to international public health, in particular in the areas of family planning, maternal-newborn health and survival, and HIV/AIDS prevention.**

A recognized public health leader, Anne has worked tirelessly to improve the health of women and girls, newborns, and children across the globe, exemplifying commitment and dedication to a cause greater than oneself. Anne leads the family planning team for USAID's Global Momentum (Global Leadership and Targeted Technical Assistance) project led by Jhpiego, a nonprofit affiliate of Johns Hopkins University. Earlier in her career, she directed the Jhpiego office in Ethiopia and partnered with local organizations and universities to expand training, research, and public health programs. With colleagues at Jhpiego, USAID, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and many others, she has devoted energy to a signature global initiative to address the needs of women and girls for accurate information about the return to fertility and pregnancy prevention

after childbirth and access to more choices for contraception. Anne has authored peer-reviewed journal articles, contributed to the World Health Organization's Programming Strategies for Postpartum Family Planning, and convened global meetings, playing a central role in mainstreaming the issue of postpartum and postabortion family planning in policies, programs, and health systems for low and middle-income countries around the world.

## Leslie Davidson '66

*Joint 2021 Recipient with Ingrid Walker-Descartes '91*

**Received the award for their contributions to child protection, health, and advocacy. Their work addressing pediatric trauma and children's mental health, disability, and welfare is difficult, emotional, and often inconspicuous. Leslie and Ingrid are children's champions.**

Leslie has devoted her life to researching disabilities in children, international child health, screening, epidemiology, and prevention of accidents and violence, particularly intimate partner violence. She has worked on an international team that developed an efficient approach to screen children for disabilities in developing countries and, for five years, led the Central Harlem School Health Program, launching childhood injury surveillance in Northern Manhattan linked to the development and evaluation of the Harlem Hospital Injury Prevention Program. Dr. Davidson moved to England in 1992 to work in the National Health Service as a pediatric epidemiologist and served as senior lecturer in pediatric epidemiology and public health at King's College, London. In 1997, she became director

of the National Pediatric Epidemiology Unit at Oxford. She returned to Columbia's Mailman School in 2002 as chair of the Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health. She is a senior member of the Department of Epidemiology, director of the newly emerging Center for Child and Family Life Epidemiology, senior health advisor to Project THRIVE of the National Center for Children in Poverty, and director of the dating violence program of the Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence.

## Ingrid Walker-Descartes '91

*Joint 2021 Recipient with Leslie Davidson '66*

Ingrid has dedicated her career to serving children as a pediatrician with a specialty in child abuse and neglect. A training faculty for residents at Maimonedes Hospital in New York, she graduated from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry in 2001.

Ingrid is active in research and has authored several publications and educational materials. Her academic appointments include a Health Resources and Services Administration clinical research fellowship in general academic pediatrics at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, where she is also an instructor. She co-chairs the Child Protection Committee and the American Academy of Pediatrics Chapter 2 Committee on the Prevention of Family Violence. A member of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Ambulatory Pediatric Association, and the AAP Special Interest Group on Child Abuse and Neglect, she is also an APA New Century Scholar Junior Mentor and a faculty scholar at the Mount Sinai

School of Medicine Office of Ethnic and Multicultural Affairs. Ingrid has received numerous honors, such as the Woodward Scholarship of the Office of Ethnic and Multicultural Affairs, the Medical Society of the State of New York Community Service Award, the Fannie & Henry Rice Scholarship, and the Rochester Prize Scholarship. She also volunteers for the Organization for International Development, which provides medical outreach to underserved communities in Jamaica without access to healthcare.

## Adnan Zubcevic '75

*2022 Recipient*

**Received the award in recognition of his longtime commitment to the social needs and mental health of immigrants and refugees.**

Adnan is the executive director and founder of Bosnian Community Center for Resource Development (BCCRD), a nonprofit agency providing community service and cultural programs to refugees and immigrants. Dedicating over 25 years of his life to advocating for immigrants and refugees and to their mental health, he has managed programs at the International Institute of Boston and created the Refugee and Immigrant Health Program at Massachusetts General Hospital in addition to his work at BCCRD.

Adnan also served on the Massachusetts Governor's Advisory Board for Refugees and the State's Multicultural Committee for refugee and immigrant mental health. Chairing the Massachusetts Mutual Assistance Coalition for several years, he has presented at various state, national, and international conferences and meetings addressing the mental health and social needs of newly arrived groups and refugees to the United States.

Though there are many facets to his work spanning the years, Adnan's dedication to refugees and immigrants remains constant. He writes, "My strongest passion has always been direct service to my patients or clients—I like to call them partners—and nothing makes me happier than to see their success in the U.S."

## Chris Rosenberg '86

*2023 Recipient*

**Received the award in recognition of his belief in the power of education and his drive to support social justice.**

Chris's career as a teacher and principal has been shaped by his belief in the power of education and his drive to support social justice. Following his graduation from CA, he attended the University of Chicago, where he majored in history, with a focus on African American history. After college, he moved to New York City and taught history at JFK High School in the Bronx. Chris also worked as a teacher recruiter for Teach for America before moving to California to teach grades 5 through 8 in Oakland and San Francisco. Over 16 years, he served as the principal at several San Francisco public schools, focusing on supporting traditionally underserved students seeking pathways to academic success. Chris has helped transform the lives of many, many students. Recently he and his family returned to the Boston area to reconnect with family.

## Richard Read '75

*2024 Recipient*

**Received the award for his dedication to responsible journalism and journalistic integrity.**

Rich was the first journalist to receive CA's annual Joan Shaw Herman Award for Distinguished Service. A lifelong newsman, he got his start at CA's student newspaper, *The Centipede*.

During his 40-year newspaper career, Rich reported from all seven continents and more than 60 countries. He won two Pulitzer Prizes, journalism's highest honor, that speak to the impact a reporter can have: one for explaining Asia's financial crisis in the 1990s by following a container of french fries from a Northwest farm to a Singapore McDonald's, and the other, with three of his colleagues at *The Oregonian*, for exposing abuses by U.S. immigration officials.

As a Tokyo-based foreign correspondent, Rich reported from North Korea, covered the war in Cambodia, and chronicled the economic opening of Russia and Vietnam. As *Los Angeles Times* bureau chief in Seattle, he covered protests and riots there and in Portland, Ore.,

as well as the rise of the Proud Boys and other far-right organizations. During the pandemic, he broke the story of a superspreader event among choral singers that helped convince U.S. health officials that COVID-19 is transmitted through the air.

Rich retired in 2021 but continues to work as a freelance writer and on documentary films.

## Leslie Taylor Davol '87 and Sam Davol '88

*2025 Recipients*

**Received the award for bringing love of learning to life through a pop-up approach that has connected urban communities and strengthened neighborhoods.**

Leslie and Sam had an idea to give at-risk youth an opportunity to read right where they already gather—in neighborhood parks, next to basketball courts, on street corners. They created a pop-up reading room that moved across New York City, offering a place to gather, read, and connect with neighbors.

“That first day, I wasn’t sure that anyone would even stop,” Sam recalls, “but suddenly there was a crowd of kids, families, and even the mailman on his route, all reading and talking to us about their favorite books. The love of learning was already there, we just had to make a place for it.”

Since then, over nearly 20 years, Leslie and Sam have used a pop-up approach to transform streets, vacant lots, storefronts, and underutilized urban space in different ways to improve lives, strengthen neighborhoods, and bring people together. Their nonprofit Street Lab now deploys more than 15 types of pop-up programs over 500

times a year across New York City, prioritizing low-income neighborhoods. And their team is working with these communities to launch Play Streets, School Streets, and other innovative, temporary uses of streets that increase public safety. They also ship kits around the world for other cities to do similar work.

“It started with a single pop-up reading room, using books borrowed from the shelves in our children’s bedroom, and a sense of urgency about making the city better,” says Leslie. “Now we get over a thousand requests a year, from individuals and community groups, asking for help to bring their dreams for their neighborhood to life. The next chapter is about making sure Street Lab can help as many of them as we possibly can.”

# Helen Chase Trainor '67

*2026 Recipient*

**Received the award for her tireless dedication to mental health advocacy.**

Helen pursued a career as an assistant federal public defender, mental health advocate, and church leader. As a lawyer, she initially served as an assistant federal public defender. In mid-career, as a United States Supreme Court Fellow, Helen organized training programs for judges returning to Iraq while also working with the State and Justice Departments to establish rule of law programs in Eastern Europe.

In 2007, Helen founded the Virginia Institutionalized Persons Project, a program affiliated with the Legal Aid Justice Center in Charlottesville, Va. She investigated civil rights abuses in Virginia's prisons and mental hospitals and successfully sued the Virginia Department of Corrections to provide decent healthcare to women prisoners in Fluvanna State Prison.

Helen's experience exposing inferior mental health conditions and resources in prisons served as the impetus for her to found the Florida Mental Health Advocacy Coalition for the National Alliance on Mental Illness in 2016. Recognizing that there is power in collective agency

and resource-sharing, the coalition brings together 17 local mental health organizations and individual volunteers in a grassroots advocacy network that aims to improve the lives of Floridians and their families affected by behavioral health conditions.

As an ordained Episcopal deacon in the early 2000s, Helen trained volunteers, developed new areas of ministry, coordinated a program to guarantee a college education to local kindergartners, and supported a halfway house for women transitioning from homelessness. Her zeal for human respect and justice informed her systemic and human-centered approach to the legal aid field that encompassed the next 13 years of her work supporting vulnerable individuals in the mental health space. Helen says "both endeavors are dedicated to creating more humane conditions for people who are otherwise overlooked and underprivileged—even disdained."

Helen inspires us to live CA's mission by her commitment to honor each individual in the pursuit of cultivating a more just and sustainable future.

“Selfishness and  
self-indulgence  
are our only  
true limitations  
and prisons.”

JOAN SHAW HERMAN '46

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