



ROBERT G. CASSILLY

Harford County Executive

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Harford County Honors 24 at the 37th Annual Harford's Most Beautiful People Awards

BEL AIR, Md., (Oct. 25, 2023) – Twenty-four selfless volunteers were honored at the 37th Annual Harford's Most Beautiful People Awards held on October 19 in Bel Air. The awards celebrate the meaningful contributions made by unsung heroes who give their time and talents to those in need throughout the county.

Hosted by County Executive Bob Cassilly and the Harford County Department of Housing and Community Services, this year's awards ceremony was held at the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene. The event was emceed by WJZ-TV's Kristy Breslin and drew more than 200 attendees, including the nominees and the citizens who nominated their fellow community members.

Terry Troy received the 2023 Ripple Effect Award, so named because of the ripples that spread from a single pebble dropped in a pond, just as a single volunteer benefits the broader community. Nominated by Amber Shrodes, Terry was chosen for over 40 years of service to Harford County. Terry is a board member for Harford County Education Foundation and has coordinated and led the Stuff the Bus school supply drive, helping thousands of Harford County school children obtain tools for educational success. She is a founding member of the Greater Bel Air Community Foundation and her fundraising efforts have been instrumental in the success of the Harford County Library Foundation, the Harford Community College Foundation, and University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health Foundation. Terry is a founding member of the Harford County Women's Giving Circle and a committee member for the Harford County Chamber of Commerce. She volunteers with SARC, the ARC, and Habitat for Humanity. She has been a leading advocate for public education in Maryland through the Maryland Association of

Boards of Education. Terry coordinated the Winds of Leadership talent show fundraiser for Harford Leadership Academy Alumni Association and in 2016 received the Maryland Association of Fundraising Professionals Unsung Hero Award, which has since been named after her. Terry's philosophy on volunteering has long been "find your passion and lend your time."

The Harford's Most Beautiful Shining Light Award was established to recognize the volunteers who bravely use their personal stories to "shine a light of awareness" on serious issues facing our county. These volunteers fight stigmas and talk about difficult subjects despite deep, personal, and painful experiences. They bring awareness and light to subjects many others refuse to acknowledge.

This year, Heidi Gerard received the Shining Light Award. Heidi is a peer recovery coach with Harford County's Family Recovery Court and a member of the community advisory board for the Clubhouse by Ashley. She also volunteers there, speaking with youth and planning activities to promote their personal growth.

New this year, the Cassilly administration recognized a volunteer first responder in Harford County.

"These are the heroes who run toward danger when everyone else runs away," County Executive Bob Cassilly said. "They take care of us when we are at our most vulnerable and comfort our families on their worst day. We deeply appreciate their service."

The First Responder Award was presented to R. Donald Thomas for over 50 years of service with the Darlington Volunteer Fire Company, during which he held several offices for the department. Donald plays an active role with the fire police and the administration within the company and is also very active with the Darlington/Dublin community and youth as a baseball coach.

Also celebrated at this year's ceremony were Harford's Most Beautiful People nominees Billy Berg, Alexandra Boebel, Bob Colaianni, Sylvia Core, George Dawson, Paul Fallace, Jason Gullion, Rosemary Hajek, Carolyn Hakes, Sharon Kachur, Carolyn Lambdin, Larry Mabe, Angelique Newman, Denise Polakoff, Bruce Pringle, Joseph Rutherford, William Saunders, Jesse Spruell, Nora Wallace, Chiwy Webster, and Carol Wright.

"I would like to thank all the volunteers who give selflessly to help their fellow citizens," County Executive Cassilly said. "Collectively, they give thousands of hours of service that strengthen our entire community."

A photo gallery of the evening will be available online at www.harfordcountymd.gov/HarfordsMostBeautiful.

This year's platinum sponsor was APG Federal Credit Union. In-kind sponsors included Richardson's Flowers and Gifts; Wegmans; A Capella Journey; HarfordTV; Jim Lockard Photography; Kristy Breslin, WJZ-TV; and the Bel Air Church of the Nazarene.

Attendees at the ceremony were treated to entertainment from A Capella Journey and HarfordTV was on hand to record the one-hour ceremony, which was livestreamed on their Facebook page. It will be available on their website, www.harfordtv.org and YouTube page.



L-R: Barbara Richardson, director of Housing and Community Services, Terry Troy, Harford's Most Beautiful Ripple Effect Award recipient and Bob Cassilly, Harford County Executive.



L-R: Barbara Richardson, director of Housing and Community Services, R. Donald Thomas, Harford's Most Beautiful First Responder Award recipient and Bob Cassilly, Harford County Executive.



L-R: Barbara Richardson, director of Housing and Community Services, Heidi Gerard, Harford's Most Beautiful Shining Light Award recipient and Bob Cassilly, Harford County Executive.

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