



City of Burnsville

100 Civic Center Parkway, Burnsville, MN 55337

Phone: 952-895-4400

Fax: 952-895-4404

www.burnsville.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Macheal Collins

City Clerk

952-895-4490

BURNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL RECOGNIZES NINE ‘COMMUNITY BUILDERS’

The Burnsville City Council recognized nine community members/organizations with their annual “Community Builder Award” during their Oct. 17 City Council Meeting. This year, awards were presented to:

Tami Allen, Fire Muster Board Member: Allen has been on the board for the annual Fire Muster celebration for a number of years. She started out as coordinator of the community parade. Last year she added secretarial duties. This year she took on the role of treasurer. As an extremely dedicated and active board member, Allen provides guidance, insight and historical background for her colleagues and newer board members.

Mary Jo DeLise, Burnsville Community Foundation: Mary Jo DeLise has a tenacious spirit and a kind heart. Her accomplishments are impressive – and many. Examples of her leadership and dedication include planning the opening of Burnsville Parkway’s high-landscape amenities and decorative lighting; serving on the steering committee for the Heart of the City design framework; playing a key role in fundraising for the Chameleon Theater Circle; and serving as Vice President of Fundraising for the Burnsville Community Foundation -- raising funds for multiple major art sculptures. DeLise has literally raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to “build a brighter future for Burnsville.”

Jim and Lois Finan, Community Services Volunteers: The Finans have been volunteering with the City of Burnsville since 2004. The duo participated in the first Community Emergency Response Team – or CERT – class that was offered in Burnsville. It was also the first CERT class held in Minnesota. The Finans were also founding members of Burnsville’s Mobile Volunteer Network (MVN) in 2005, and have been active participants until they retired just a few short weeks ago. They are block captains through Neighborhood Watch, and also volunteer at their church and with the Burnsville Beyond the Yellow Ribbon campaign.

Teagan Langeness, Burnsville Youth Collaborative: Langeness’ job is to connect with and help Burnsville’s youth through the Burnsville Youth Collaborative. He helps kids grow and learn while they explore their passions, and become the best versions of themselves. Langeness has the uncanny ability to truly understand the children who struggle the most, because he is both empathetic and has a genuine concern for their success.

Justin Lassen, Burnsville Youth Collaborative/YMCA: Lassen is described as an amazing person with a big heart, especially when it comes to youth. He is a leader, mentor and a positive adult role model. Justin goes above and beyond to support youth in Burnsville at both the YMCA and the Burnsville Youth Collaborative. He works with some of Burnsville’s most challenged youth, helping them build confidence in themselves, and has helped create an environment where youth can grow and thrive.

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Beverly Price, Burnsville Police Department: Officer Price, in her role as a school resource officer, helped secure \$35,000 in musical instrument donations for Nicollet Middle School. During last school year, Price learned that the school was worried they would not be able to provide enough instruments for band students. Beverly reached out to the Barry Manilow Foundation and was able to secure a surprise donation, including two flutes, four trumpets, six clarinets and three French horns.

John Qualley, Burnsville Volunteer: Qualley has lived in Burnsville for more than 20 years. During most of that time, he has volunteered on the Westchester Square homeowner’s association board. A contractor by trade, he has helped his community keep costs down by volunteering his time and skills to help maintain the 40-unit townhome development. Qualley also supported several afterschool sporting activities, including spending some time as a coach. In doing so, he has supported many of the community’s youth, contributing his fair share to help ensure a brighter future for them all.

Small Business Advisory Board – Vernon Stading: The Small Business Advisory Board, headquartered in Burnsville, is a group of experts from the south metro who offer FREE education, networking, and resources to local entrepreneurs. For several years, the group has offered free, monthly educational luncheons on a variety of business topics. In recent years they began to offer “Advisory Board for Hire services,” in-depth educational workshops, a Preferred Vendor program, and an investor matching program. Today, the board sees between 50-100 business owners, entrepreneurs, and decision makers each month. Several of the board’s members own businesses in Burnsville.

Heather Walberg, FIRST Tech Challenge Robotics: Walberg is a long-time Burnsville resident. She became involved with FTC Robotics in 2012, when her daughter wanted to join a team. The team needed a coach, and Walberg was excited to give it a try. With only three student members, FTC Team 7588 - The PRIDE, qualified for and competed in the State Tournament in their 1st year – and has made it to State in each of its four seasons. Heather took over as the ISD 191 FTC Robotics Advisor in 2014, and has grown the program to eight teams, with 55 students and 18 adult mentors. FTC Robotics does not receive any funding from the school district, so Walberg writes grants, works with community businesses and runs fundraisers to pay for equipment and tournament fees.

The Community Builder Award began in 1998 and has been presented each year to individuals, groups or businesses that make contributions that build community and a lasting impact on the quality of life in Burnsville.



Pictured above are members of the Burnsville City Council and the 2017 Community Builders during the Tuesday, Oct. 17 Burnsville City Council Meeting.