

For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 10, 2016

BRIDGES HONORS VOLUNTEERS AT ANNUAL MEETING

Bridges Outreach held their annual meeting on Tuesday, June 7 at the Summit Volunteer First Aid Squad. The evening was a recap of the year's highlights, and a forum to recognize a number of people who made important contributions to Bridges. Nine high school students were awarded Bridges Founders' Award, given to high school juniors or seniors who have distinguished themselves in terms of their work with Bridges. This year's award recipients were:

- Lorenzo Beer, Oratory
- Caroline Deumling, Corpus Christi Church of Chatham
- Samantha Gargiulo, First Congregational Church of Westfield
- Paul Malatesta, Stanley Congregational Church of Chatham
- Malcolm Mead, Delbarton School
- Connie Pullan, Summit High School
- Carmen Ruiz, Oak Knoll School
- Anthony Smith, Oratory
- Steven Zoughy, Cranford High School.

“These students have made real commitments to helping people in need, and we're grateful for the many contributions they've made to Bridges,” said Dan RosenHanst, Bridges' Director of Operations.

Several adult volunteers were recognized for their commitment to Bridges: Debbie Abbattista, Yve Cohen, Jordan Fried, Joan Oslzewski, and Al Schweiker. All regularly volunteer on Bridges Runs (street outreach visits). These volunteers show up at the outreach site before the Bridges truck arrives, to talk with people on the street. They develop real friendships with and are critical to the relationships that Bridges forges with the people served on Runs.

Two more volunteers, Jean Trees and Anna Velez, were honored for the many hours they spend every week sorting donations and supplies. “Bridges is fortunate to have so many committed and talented volunteers. Volunteers are at the heart of our organization, and make Bridges' work possible”, said Lois Bhatt, Bridges' Executive Director.

Founded in 1988, Bridges reaches out to the homeless in New York City, and Newark, Irvington, and Summit, New Jersey every week. Last year, Bridges served 21,000 people. More than 2,600 volunteers helped deliver more than 63,000 brown bag meals, served more than 49,000 cups of beverages, gave 10,000 pairs of new socks and underwear, and provided 1000 new backpacks to children in need.

Bridges also runs Project Connect in Newark, NJ, which offers case management services that link homeless people to health and social services to lead to a healthier life and, ultimately,

employment and housing. The ID program assists clients in obtaining New Jersey State IDs, essential to obtaining social service benefits, a job, or even a shelter bed.

For more information, please visit our website at www.bridgesoutreach.org, or call 908-273-0176.



Photo caption: Founders' Award recipients (L to R): Anthony Smith, Lorenzo Beer, Bridges' Dan RosenHanst, Caroline Deumling, Samantha Gargiulo, Malcolm Mead, Connie Pullan, Steven Zoughy. Missing: Paul Malatesta, Carmen Ruiz.

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