

BRIDGES HONORS VOLUNTEERS, AND ANNOUNCES NEW TRUSTEES AND BOARD CO-CHAIR

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

- Alice Berndt, The Pingry School
- Clare Bowles, Chatham High School
- Ava Fitzsimons, Millburn High School
- Adam Present, The Pingry School
- Will Hayward, Corpus Christi Church
- Josephine Klingeman, Morristown Beard School
- Olivia McGeough, Chatham High School
- Peter Morariu, Westfield High School
- Olivia Virzi, The Pingry School

"These students have made real commitments to helping people in need, and we're happy to recognize the many contributions they've made to Bridges," said Patrick Davis, Bridges' Director of Operations.

Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child was honored for twenty years of partnering with Bridges. Kathleen Lynch, an Oak Knoll staff member who will retire this year, was recognized for her many years of supporting Bridges. Barbara Romano was honored for her long-term commitment to the Summit Luminary project, which benefits Bridges and many other local organizations. The Summit Rotary Club was recognized for the assistance they have repeatedly provided to Bridges and local people in need. Ted Dengler was honored for consistently signing up for the most difficult and unpopular street outreach visit dates, the ones that no one else will sign up for, such as holidays. Danielle Molleur, was recognized for the many hours she spends volunteering every week at Bridges. Mary Conway, Kim Sleeman, Diane Hoey and Ginger Stearns were honored for their work over many years to make Bridges' fundraising events enjoyable and successful. "Bridges is fortunate to have so many committed and talented volunteers. Volunteers are the heart of our organization, and they make the work that Bridges' does possible," said Lois Bhatt, Bridges' Executive Director.

Bridges also announced the appointment of three new Trustees and a Board Co-Chair for its new fiscal year that began June 1.

Pam Gumpfort of Summit, who served as Board Chair last year, will Co-Chair this year with Coleen McCaffery, who previously served as Secretary. The three new members of Bridges' board are:

- Marielle Cohard-Radice of Summit
- Moses Oliva of Newark
- Ross Silver of Short Hills

“We are so pleased that these talented individuals have committed to helping Bridges achieve its mission,” said Lois Bhatt, Executive Director. “The breadth and depth of commitment, expertise and energy on Bridges’ board positions us well to expand and enhance our programs.”

Marielle Cohard-Radice is executive vice president and head of development at Daiichi Sankyo. Moses Oliva is a marketing consultant with extensive experience with large corporations. Ross Silver is a real estate partner at Fried Frank in New York.

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.

In March 2014, Bridges opened Project Connect in Newark at the epicenter of the homeless community. There, Bridges offers access to medical care, legal services, jobs, housing, and IDs. Case managers work with individuals to develop a set of achievable goals to lead to better quality of life and, ultimately, housing and independence. Weekly street outreach and services at Project Connect have a symbiotic relationship. People met on street outreach learn about services at Project Connect and vice versa. For those who need a meal or necessity during the week, they can visit Project Connect. In this way, Bridges continually strengthens their relationships with the homeless.