



Safe Harbor Cohasset founder receives Unsung Heroine award

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Posted Jul 6, 2018 at 2:55 PM

Since 2014, Safe Harbor Cohasset Coalition founder Christine Murphy has been doing everything within her power to have a positive impact on the lives of those in the community through her work with the coalition. Now she is receiving the recognition for her actions many in the community feel is overdue.

This spring, Murphy was officially awarded the Unsung Heroine award by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women. The commission describes Unsung Heroines as women who are not always in the new but are consistently making a difference in their communities.

Back in February, state Representative Joan Meschino (D-Hull) reached out to Selectman Diane Kennedy in search of a recommendation for the award. Kennedy said no thought was required on her part when recommending Murphy.

“I immediately thought of [Murphy], whose tenacious, smart, focused determination to tackle the drug crisis on behalf of our community-at-large is amazing, inspiring and fierce,” Kennedy said.

Murphy said she was surprised to learn she was one of nearly 130 other women from across the Commonwealth to receive the award, but that it felt good to earn the recognition.

“I was humbled and really honored,” Murphy said. “I put my nose to the grind stone and I rustle feathers. Of course I try to make as many friends as I can, but sometimes when you want to get work done, you have to step on a few toes.”

Getting Safe Harbor up and running to begin with was no simple task. Despite coping with a number of unforeseen challenges at the start, Murphy said she was thrilled once the coalition finally got on track.

Since then, Safe Harbor has worked diligently to combat the current drug crisis. The coalition recently received a five-year \$625,000 “drug-free community” grant which helps communities improve their education and prevention efforts to curb substance abuse.

But Murphy did not want to take all of the credit for the work that has been done as of late by the coalition, thanking the coalition’s program director Nicole Garrity and project coordinator Chris Colleran for all of their hard work since joining the coalition this past year. “I look at this and think it wasn’t just me who did this,” she said. “Everyone involved deserves recognition.”

Murphy also lauded the work of the coalition’s eight-person steering committee, who she said have been the movers and shakers behind the scenes.

Safe Harbor will continue their efforts to curb the current drug crisis by continuing to educate local parents and children of all ages about the dangers around substance use. Murphy said the coalition hopes to begin targeting lower grade levels before any experimentation can begin, and hopes to educate students in grades four through six about the importance of social-emotional health, as well.

Suicide prevention has also been a big focus for the coalition as of late, which Murphy said is becoming more and more prevalent in communities like Cohasset. With an increase in referrals to crisis centers (mostly for adolescents) and calls to the police regarding adolescents struggling with their mental health, Murphy said the coalition’s work is just as important now as it has ever been.

“I get the applause, but they do all the work,” she said.

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