

2025

CITY OF
CHAMPIONS
GALA & AWARDS
CEREMONY



THURSDAY 9.25.2025
at 6:00PM

HYATT REGENCY
BOSTON

1 Ave de Lafayette,
Boston, MA 02111

 COMMUNITY
WORK SERVICES

**Congratulations to
Community Work Services
for a job well done**

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Program

JESSICA BROWN

Master of Ceremonies

CRAIG STENNING, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome and Video Presentation

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

GOVERNOR MAURA HEALEY

HELEN KELLER LEADERSHIP AWARD

M.L. CARR

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY AWARD

KANDIA BLEACH

ROBERT FAWLS PARTICIPANT AWARD

DINNER

NATIONAL GRID

WORKFORCE IMPACT AWARD

MAYOR RAYMOND FLYNN

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

CLOSING REMARKS

CELEBRATION COMMITTEE

Don Gillis

Janice Kimsey

Jason Pound

Laura Reiman

Jamie Ross

George Spilios

Susan Yule



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2025 **CWS City of Champions Celebration!** We are thrilled to have you with us this evening as we honor the extraordinary champions who have shaped our community and celebrate the life-changing work of Community Work Services.

For more than 148 years, CWS has remained steadfast in its mission to support individuals facing barriers to employment. We help participants build both foundational and technical skills, while providing the guidance and encouragement needed to achieve lasting success in the workforce. This year, amid growing demand and reduced federal funding, our work has become more critical than ever. Through new partnerships and program innovations, we continue to expand opportunities and transform lives.

Tonight, we proudly recognize our distinguished honorees—**Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey, Mayor Ray Flynn, ML Carr, and our workforce partner National Grid**—as well as our incredible CWS Participant Champion. Their leadership, service, and dedication reflect the very best of our community, and we are honored to celebrate them.

We are especially grateful to **Jessica Brown, Emmy Award-winning WCVB anchor**, for graciously serving as our emcee, and to the **Celebration Committee members** whose tireless efforts have made this evening possible.

The funds raised tonight will directly support CWS programs—empowering participants through our **culinary, hospitality, custodial and digital literacy**—and helping us to continue building pathways to employment and economic self-sufficiency. Because of your support, CWS can keep growing to meet the rising need and ensure more lives are changed.

On behalf of all of us at CWS, thank you for your generosity, your partnership, and your belief in the power of work. Together, we are building brighter futures and stronger communities.

Enjoy this special evening of celebration and inspiration!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray A. Flynn".

Executive Director

Helen Keller Leadership Award



Helen Keller is recognized as a person who overcame her disabilities to become a world-famous speaker, author and advocate for people with disabilities.

At 19 months, Keller contracted an unknown illness that left her both deaf and blind. After her mother was advised to contact the Perkins Institute for the Blind, then located in South Boston, she was introduced to Anne Sullivan, who became instructor and companion until her death in 1936.

In 1888, Keller started attending the Perkins Institute for the Blind. Helen's Boston connections continued when she studied at the Horace Mann School for the Deaf, located in Alston. In 1900, Helen was admitted to Radcliffe College and graduated Phi Beta Kappa, becoming the first deaf-blind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Helen is remembered as an advocate for people with disabilities. ***She was a board advisor for CWS for many years.*** Helen was dedicated to helping women and those with disabilities become economically self-sufficient through advocating for training that would result in jobs. In 1915, she and George A. Kessler founded Helen Keller International (HKI), devoted to research in vision, health and nutrition. In 1920, she helped to found the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

Governor Maura Healey

Recipient of the Helen Keller Leadership Award



Maura Healey is the 73rd Governor of Massachusetts, making history in 2022 as the first woman elected Governor in the state and the first openly lesbian Governor elected in the country. In just two years, she's delivered major results for working families—cutting taxes for the first time in two decades, creating the most generous child tax credit in the nation, and signing the \$5 billion Affordable Homes Act to tackle the housing crisis. She's made community college free, expanded access to childcare and maternal health, lowered health care costs, and invested billions in roads, bridges, and public transit.

A former two-term Attorney General and professional basketball player, Healey is a fierce advocate for justice, equity, and opportunity. She has safeguarded reproductive rights, driven investment in climate tech and biotech, and championed Massachusetts' leadership in innovation. Raised in a working-class household, Healey brings deep empathy and purpose to her role—and continues to lead with vision, integrity, and results.

M.L. Carr

Recipient of the Civic Responsibility Award



M.L. Carr launched his professional basketball career after graduating from Guilford College as an All American and NAIA Championship leader. He played in the ABA, NBA, and internationally—earning MVP honors with the Israel Sabras and All-Rookie honors with the Spirits of St. Louis. After joining the NBA's Detroit Pistons, where he led the league in steals, Carr became one of the most sought-after free agents and signed with the Boston Celtics in 1979. He played through 1985, winning two NBA Championships and earning a place in Celtics history with his iconic steal and dunk in the 1984 Finals. He later served as Director of Basketball Operations, Head Coach, and Director of Corporate Development for the Celtics, and became a minority owner of the Charlotte Bobcats in 2004.

Beyond the court, Carr launched M.L. Enterprises, served as a spokesperson for major brands, and is now CEO of dSideAI and partner at New Technology Ventures. A committed philanthropist, he founded the M.L. Carr Scholarship Fund and the John Henry Carr Alzheimer's and Aging Foundation, earning numerous honors for his community work. He has served on several corporate and nonprofit boards, and is the author of three books. Carr and his wife Sylvia live in Boston and are proud parents and grandparents.

Robert (Bob) Fawls Participant Award



Bob Fawls was a husband, father of 3 daughters, trusted neighbor, and friend to all, and a talented financial consultant. He was co-founder of Basis Point Group, LLC and served as the company's Managing Partner. Bob had more than 20 years of experience in Banks, Insurance Companies, Investment Management companies and pension funds. He served as Controller and Chief Financial Officer for Xerox in its Middle Eastern group. As a Senior Vice President for an investment analytic and portfolio management software company, Bob was trusted by many of the world's largest investment management firms to automate and streamline operations. As Vice President and General Manager for one of the largest financial services companies, he also led the development and enhancement of on-line trading and settlement products.

Bob was always willing to offer his expertise or knowledge in a given area and never passed up an opportunity to help solve a problem. He was driven to help those who were struggling and needed a break or simply provide some guidance. This is why he was drawn to CWS when he joined the Board of Directors in 2004. He was dedicated to his work with the organization and went on to become President of the Board of Directors in 2008, serving in that position until 2010.

He continued to serve as Vice Chair of the board from 2011 until his death in November of 2017. In 2013, he was awarded the Lord Camperdown Award for Outstanding Service to CWS. He took great pride in all that CWS achieved in serving individuals with different abilities and worked to ensure that the work of the organization could continue, grow and help others for years to come.



Recipient of the Workforce Impact Award

CWS is proud to recognize National Grid for its outstanding partnership and leadership in advancing equitable access to careers in the energy sector. A leading energy delivery company, National Grid plays a critical role in providing electricity and natural gas to millions of customers across the Northeast United States and the United Kingdom.

Founded in 1990 and headquartered in London, with U.S. operations based in Waltham, Massachusetts, National Grid employs more than 29,000 people globally, including over 17,000 in the United States. The company serves more than 20 million people through its electric and gas networks, ensuring a reliable, sustainable, and inclusive energy future.

One of the most impactful initiatives launched in partnership with National Grid is the Energy Infrastructure Academy (EIA)—an innovative, 8-week, 200-hour registered pre-apprenticeship program designed for work-ready adults eager to build careers in the energy field. The program blends job readiness training with industry-recognized certifications in gas and electrical safety, OSHA-30, hands-on instruction, and on-site learning experiences.

Upon completion, participants are equipped to apply for entry- and mid-level union roles at National Grid, opening the door to stable, high-wage, and wealth-building career opportunities. The EIA was developed with a clear purpose: to remove barriers and create inclusive access to the growing energy infrastructure industry for all who are ready to pursue it.

We are honored to celebrate National Grid's vision, innovation, and unwavering investment in building a diverse, skilled, and resilient energy workforce.

Mayor Raymond Flynn

Recipient of the Public Service Award



Ray Flynn was an All-American college basketball player at Providence College. Selected as the “MVP” in the 1963 NIT, he had a brief stint with the Boston Celtics. Before entering politics, he worked with young people. Flynn served in the Mass House from 1971 to 1979 and on the Boston City Council from 1978 to 1983. Elected mayor of Boston in 1983, serving until 1993, he addressed neglected neighborhoods, built thousands of units of affordable housing, parks, playgrounds, and a new Boston City Hospital. He prioritized ending the racial conflicts he inherited and providing economic opportunities for poor and working-class families in the city.

President Bill Clinton appointed Flynn as Ambassador to the Holy See (Vatican), a position he held from 1993 to 1997. Flynn has dedicated his life to helping children with special needs, volunteering at a Providence orphanage during college, and leading the state’s enactment of Chapter 766. He created the city’s first playground for children with disabilities at Columbus Park, along with five other similar playgrounds.

A recent book, *The Battle for Boston: How Mayor Ray Flynn and Community Organizers Fought Racism and Downtown Power Brokers*, by Don Gillis, many of his important social and economic justice initiatives. Flynn and his wife, Cathy, have six children and seventeen grandchildren.

Jessica Brown

MASTER OF CEREMONIES



Emmy-award winning journalist Jessica Brown co-anchors WCVB Channel 5's NewsCenter 5 at Noon with Antoinette Antonio as well as NewsCenter 5 at 4PM with Ben Simmoneau. Jessica also serves as NewsCenter 5's medical reporter.

Before coming to WCVB, Jessica was a weekday morning anchor and lifestyle host at WXIX-TV in Cincinnati, OH. While at WXIX since 2012, Jessica's live, breaking news coverage included many high-profile stories including the murder trial of Ray Tensing, the aftermath of George Floyd protests, and more.

Prior to joining WXIX, Jessica was an anchor/reporter at KSNF-TV and KODE-TV in Joplin, MO where she not only experienced but covered one of the deadliest tornadoes in history. She rode out the tornado in her bathtub, ultimately losing her apartment to the storm. She praises the Joplin community's incredible resiliency in the wake of the storm's devastation. Jessica's career in broadcast news began over a decade ago at WAGA-TV in Atlanta, GA.

Jessica is an active member of the National Association of Black Journalists. She is also very dedicated to community service and believes service is one of the ways she feels connected to her faith. She is especially passionate about volunteering her time to mentor young girls.

A native of South Florida, Jessica hails from a multi-cultural background. Her father is Jamaican, and her mother is afro-Costa Rican (pura vida!). Her heritage has inspired her to seek out opportunities for travel and adventure and has fostered a love of exploring different cultures around the world.

Jessica earned her B.A. degree from Florida State University. Outside of the newsroom, you can find her at the dog park with her pup Rocco, checking out new eateries, and traveling the globe.



September 25, 2025

Dear Friends of Community Work Services:

I write today in celebration of Community Work Services (CWS) and the honorees at this year's City of Champions event. Since its founding in 1877, Community Work Services has served as a beacon of dignity, compassion, education, and support for those in need.

The commitment CWS has shown to the communities it serves is mirrored by tonight's honorees. Governor Maura Healey, Mayor Raymond Flynn, M.L. Carr, and National Grid – a partner of CWS in their clean energy workforce initiative – all share the same vision: to advance the economic and social well-being of the impoverished and disadvantaged. Your work is essential in ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to thrive, and through your efforts, you are helping to shape a stronger, more inclusive next generation of leaders.

Thank you to tonight's honorees, and to Community Work Services – I wish you the very best in the many years of service that are surely still to come.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Markey

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

AYANNA PRESSLEY
7TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

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DORCHESTER, MA 02122
(617) 830-0440

WWW.PRESSLEY.HOUSE.GOV

September 25, 2025

Dear Family,

It is my honor to welcome all of you to the Community Work Services' 2025 City of Champions Gala & Awards Ceremony.

And I am grateful for the opportunity to say thank you to the dedicated staff at Community Work Services for putting love of community into action each and every day. For more than 140 years, your collective labor of love has empowered countless individuals and families to build on their unique skills and talents and allowed them to pursue their dreams.

The work of actualizing the "Power of Possible" is only possible in collaboration and coalition—and tonight's illustrious list of honorees recognize the need for intentional partnership. Congratulations to all champions being honored and thank you for your commitment to this mission.

Boston is the City of Champions because of our commitment to put in the hard work and our willingness to sacrifice for teammates, our neighbors, our communities, our Commonwealth. Thank you for showing up in big and small ways and for the opportunity to be your partner in this critical work.

Yours In Service,



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

City of Boston IN CITY COUNCIL



OFFICIAL RESOLUTION

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR ED FLYNN

Be it Resolved, that the Boston City Council
Extends its Recognition to:

COMMUNITY WORK SERVICES

IN RECOGNITION OF:

Your 148 years of service to Boston residents in providing hands-on training and support to people who face barriers while obtaining employment. Thank you for helping our residents achieve self-sufficiency through innovative job training and placement. Community Work

Services plays an integral role in a global network of non-profit agencies dedicated to advancing the economic and social well-being of the disadvantaged. We commend you for all of your hard work to help our undersupported communities gain independence!

and Be it further Resolved that the Boston City Council extends its best wishes for continued success; that this Resolution be duly signed by the President of the City Council and attested to and a copy thereof transmitted by the Clerk of the City of Boston.



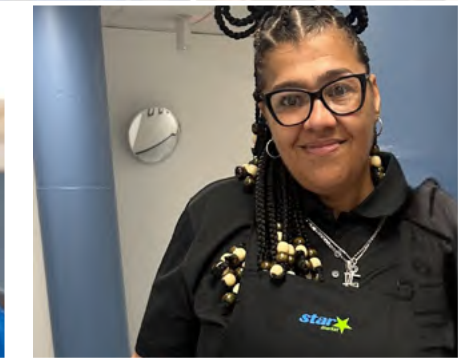
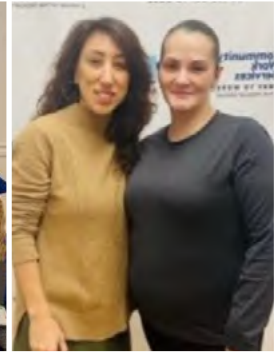
By: Ruthzee Loujane
President of the City Council

Attest: Dessie Beecher
Asst. Clerk of the City of Boston

Offered by: Edward M. Flynn

Date: August 25, 2025





National Grid's
Strategic Workforce Development team
appreciates the partnership with



on the Energy Infrastructure Academy.



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that provides access to opportunities for
wealth-building career pathways and
training for those who wish to work
in the energy sector.

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BRONZE

THANK YOU

to the incredible CWS staff
whose passion and dedication make it happen every day—
for our participants, our community, and our mission.

Your hard work changes lives.

Congratulations to 2025 CWS honorees,
whose achievements and commitment inspire us all.
We celebrate your impact and leadership.

With appreciation,
Steve DeSalvo





COMMUNITY
WORK SERVICES



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supporting the amazing work of CWS in Boston,
and it's our pleasure to congratulate the *City of*
Champions honorees!



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***Congratulations
to tonight's honorees!***





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CWS BOARD AND STAFF

congratulates

2025

**CITY OF CHAMPIONS
HONOREES**



The Fedcap Group Proudly Celebrates CWS and 2025 Honorees!

For more than 140 years,
CWS has been creating opportunities, building skills,
and changing lives.

We are proud of the CWS team for their
unwavering commitment to helping individuals
overcome barriers, gain meaningful employment,
and achieve lasting economic well-being.

***Together, we are putting people to work and
strengthening our communities.***



Community Work Services empowers individuals living in poverty to transform their lives through job training and employment services. Our partnership will create and provide a skilled workforce to staff your businesses.

Our training programs provide a mix of classroom learning and hands-on training to help participants develop technical and interpersonal skills to become successful in today's competitive job market.

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Founded in 1877, Community Work Services
helps people who face barriers to work
obtain employment and achieve
self-sufficiency through innovative job
training, placement, and support services.

