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UNH Recognizes Victim Advocate for Her Work in Ending Gender-Based Violence

Wednesday, October 30, 2019

(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2019/10/30/UNH-RECOGNIZES-VICTIM-VICTIM-VICTIM-ADVOCATE-ADVOCATE-ADVOCATE-HER-HER-HER-WORK-WORK-WORK-ENDING-ENDING-ENDING-GENDER-GENDER-GENDER-BASED-BASED-BASED-VIOLENCE-VIOLENCE-VIOLENCE)

DURHAM, N.H.—The Prevention Innovations Research Center (PIRC) at the University of New Hampshire recognized the work of Lynda Ruel, director of the New Hampshire Attorney General's Victim/Witness Assistance Unit, with the Mary Mayhew Practitioner Award.

“We are honored to recognize Lynda,” said Sharyn Potter, PIRC executive director of research. “This award highlights the committed and talented individuals who make a difference every day. Her dedication to victims is unparalleled. She is a true champion in that she not only works to advocate and improve the lives of victims and their families but also to reduce and prevent crimes.”

The Prevention Innovations Research Center Mary Mayhew Practitioner Award recognizes individuals



LYNDA RUEL (CENTER), DIRECTOR OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE UNIT, RECEIVED THE PREVENTION INNOVATIONS RESEARCH CENTER MARY MAYHEW PRACTITIONER AWARD FOR HER WORK IN ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE. PICTURED FROM L-R: JANE STAPLETON, PIRC; UNH PRESIDENT JAMES W. DEAN, JR.; RUEL; GOVERNOR CHRIS SUNUNU; AND SHARYN POTTER, PIRC. COURTESY PHOTO.

for their vision and leadership in ending gender-based violence, including sexual and relationship violence and stalking. It honors individual accomplishments, rather than the work of an organization. It was renamed to honor Mary Mayhew, one of the five founders of PIRC.

“Lynda’s work embodies Prevention Innovations’ commitment to honoring practitioners and recognizing their important contributions to creating a violence-free world,” said Jane Stapleton, executive director of practice at PIRC.

One of Ruel’s nominators wrote of her decades of dedication to victims of crime in the state. “Despite the tragedy, trauma and sadness that she has witnessed over this time, Lynda has maintained a high level of compassion for victims, her sense of humor and ability to always ‘see the big picture’. She is a tremendous advocate for so many.”

In attendance at the ceremony were UNH President James W. Dean, Jr. and Governor Chris Sununu, who praised Lynda for her direct positive impact on the people of New Hampshire as he presented her with the award.

PIRC works to end sexual and relationship violence and stalking through the power of effective practitioner and research partnerships. PIRC practitioners and researchers pioneered the bystander intervention and response strategies which are delivering lasting cultural change in high schools, colleges and workplaces across the U.S. and around the world. Described by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as the gold standard in evidence-based prevention and response strategies, PIRC researchers and practitioners are leading the way to create safe, equitable communities free from sexual violence.

The New Hampshire Office of Victim/Witness Assistance (OVWA) (<https://www.doj.nh.gov/criminal/victim-assistance/>) was created to provide 24-hour direct services and support in all of the state's homicide cases and to coordinate efforts to develop and standardize statewide victim services, protocols (<https://www.doj.nh.gov/criminal/victim-assistance/protocols.htm>) and policies and training for all of the professionals involved. Recognizing that the criminal justice system can be confusing and frightening, the mission of OVWA is to ensure that all victims are treated with dignity and respect and provided with the services and support they need, throughout their involvement with the system.

PHOTO AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD:

http://unh.edu/sites/default/files/mary_mayhew_award_event_2019_photograph21.jpeg
 (http://unh.edu/sites/default/files/mary_mayhew_award_event_2019_photograph21.jpeg)

Caption: Lynda Ruel (center), director of the New Hampshire Attorney General's Victim/Witness Assistance Unit, received the Prevention Innovations Research Center Mary Mayhew Practitioner Award for her work in ending gender-based violence. Pictured from l-r: Jane Stapleton, PIRC; UNH President James W. Dean, Jr.; Ruel; Governor Chris Sununu; and Sharyn Potter, PIRC. Courtesy photo.

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