

## 2023 Willard M. McRae Community Diversity Award



*Willard M. McRae*

Since 2002, the Willard M. McRae Community Diversity Award has been presented annually to honor an individual who has made an outstanding and ongoing contribution to the cause of promoting and celebrating diversity, equity, and inclusion in the communities served by Liberty Bank. It is named in honor of the late Willard McRae, past chairman of the Liberty Bank Board of Directors and a founding member of the Liberty Bank Foundation Board of Directors. A lifelong Middletown resident who passed away in early 2016, Willard was known for his extraordinary commitment to equal access and opportunities for all, regardless of economic status, race, background, disability, or other factors. His contributions to children's mental health, education, and human services made a positive difference in the lives of thousands of people.

In 2022, we will recognize a nonprofit organization that is having a significant impact on achieving equity, social justice, or economic mobility for historically marginalized groups or economically disenfranchised individuals with a vision towards creating more vibrant and inclusive communities. The organization selected to receive the Community Diversity Award will have enhanced the quality of life of individuals by raising awareness that diversity, equity, inclusion, and racial justice are sources of strength in our communities.

### **Criteria by which award nominees will be evaluated include:**

- Exemplary contribution to celebrating, promoting, and increasing awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our communities
- Extraordinary participation over an extended period of time in activities that promote and celebrate diversity, equity, and inclusion and or open doors of access and opportunity to historically marginalized or economically disenfranchised individuals
- Demonstrated leadership in enhancing quality of life for all at the organization or in the community
- Significant impact on building of relationships between different people--whether their differences be of race, ethnic background, disability, religion, gender, sexual preference, national origin, economic status, or any other aspect of diversity

### **Eligibility Requirements:**

- Nominees must be a 501(c)3 or 170(c) registered nonprofit who operates in the area served by Liberty Bank. That area is defined as all of Middlesex and New Haven Counties, plus the towns of Andover, Avon, Berlin, Bloomfield, Bozrah, Bristol, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, East Hartford, East Lyme, Franklin, Glastonbury, Granby, Groton, Hartford, Hebron, Lebanon, Lyme, Manchester, Mansfield, Marlborough, Montville, New Britain, New London, Newington, Norwich, Old Lyme, Plainville, Rocky Hill, Salem, Shelton, Simsbury, Southington, Sprague, Stonington, Waterford, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windham, and Windsor. Organizations in Western Massachusetts are also eligible.
- An organization may nominate itself for the award.

**Selection Process:**

Nominations for the award are solicited from the communities served by Liberty Bank each year. Liberty Bank's Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council and a committee consisting of Liberty Bank officers and leaders from the communities served by the bank will review the nominations and determine the award winner.

**Award:**

The organization selected to receive the Willard M. McRae Community Diversity Award will receive a \$10,000 donation from the Liberty Bank Foundation.

**How to Make a Nomination:**

Nominations for the 2023 award may be made until Monday, October 30, 2023, via the [nomination form](#). The recipient will be announced at a celebration held in 2024.

Questions about the Willard M. McRae Community Diversity Award may be directed to **Toral Maher** at (860) 638-2961 or [tmaher@liberty-bank.com](mailto:tmaher@liberty-bank.com).