

## ***Framingham Cultural Council Contributor of the Year Awards***

**The 2021 Contributor of the Year awards was given to Dr. Yumi Park Huntington,  
*Associate Professor of Art History at Framingham State University  
and Chair of the Arts & Ideas Series.***



**Yumi Park Huntington  
Framingham State University Professor**

Dr. Park Huntington creatively put together an interdisciplinary program, open to the Framingham community during the pandemic, under the theme “The Public Self: Citizen as Change Agent” with an incredible team of speakers and performers. There were lectures about politics and social justice, screenings of worldwide recognized movies and local documentaries, performances by Queer, Black, Latino poets, workshops on creativity, and conversations with Pulitzer winner authors. She chaired the program with care and amazing organization skills, from the call for proposals, to budgeting, promotion, and hosting of events.

**The 2020 Contributor of the Year awards were given to the Herb Chasan, Hoops & Homework founder, and the Hoops and Homework Program Team and also to Drita Protopapa, MAPA Translations & Language Solutions, president and founder.**



**Herb Chasan  
Hoops & Homework Founder**

Hoops and Homework was spearheaded by Herb Chasan in 2012 as a means of providing enrichment services for children from an underserved neighborhood in Framingham. The Hoops and Homework program team provides a positive social and learning experience, including after school homework and recreation programs, for neighborhood children at two locations: the Framingham Housing Authority's site at Carlson and Pusan Road and the Cochituate Cooperative site at Interfaith Terrace.



**Drita Protopapa  
MAPA Founder and President**

The second Contributor of the Year award recipient, Drita Protopapa, has been a business owner and community builder for many years. Drita has volunteered her translation services to area groups and provided support to immigrants and small businesses. She has also volunteered her services to the Brazilian American Center (BRACE) in Framingham. Her company, MAPA, provides translations in writing, in person, and by phone. MAPA also provides video interpreter services, multilingual voiceovers and videos for the Framingham community

**The 2019 Contributor of the Year award was given to the Danforth Art Museum and School Transition Team for their commitment to managing the transition to a new facility, maintaining this cultural anchor in Framingham.**



**Debra Petke  
Art Museum Executive Director**

Debra became the Danforth Executive Director in 2015, having previously been President of Lyme, CT Academy College of Fine Arts. Upon joining the Danforth School and Museum, she became responsible for finding a new home for the Danforth Museum when it had to vacate the Danforth building. She partnered with Framingham State University to acquire the Maynard building on the Framingham Center Common and, with her team, managed the move to the new facility.

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**The 2018 Contributor of the Year was Mark Contois  
Framingham Public Library Director  
For being an outstanding community resource and leader  
who has facilitated many cultural programs.**

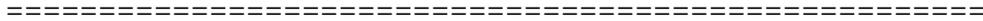


Mark Contois has been a professional librarian for over 33 years, the last 10 as the Director of the Framingham Public Library. Mark is involved in the community in which he works, in his profession, and many organizations in his home town of Palmer, Massachusetts. Mark is a strong believer that the public library is more effective and impactful when it aligns and works in collaboration with community organizations and institutions. The Framingham Public Library is recognized as a leader in collaborative programs and partnerships.

**The 2017 Contributor of the Year was Scott Greenberg,  
Framingham State University Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs  
and Dean of Continuing Education.**



Scott was recognized for bringing Lifelong Learning Lectures and Adventures Classes to the Framingham Community. The programs are the result of a great partnership between two institutional gems: Framingham State University and the Framingham Public Library. Many FSU faculty, as well as faculty from other colleges in the region, have shared their expertise through these programs. More than 800 people have attended classes in the programs this year.



**The 2016 Contributor of the Year was Donna Wresenski.  
Fine and Performing Arts Director for the Framingham Schools.**

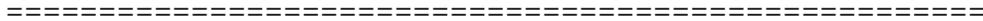


Donna has built the Framingham High School Theatre/Drama Program which has provided cultural opportunities for so many of the Framingham students over the years. Under Donna's direction, the FHS Drama Company won the 2016 Massachusetts Educational Theatre Guild (METG) Drama Festival State Champions award. Donna has done a wonderful job developing the Drama group and building a standard for drama performances for Framingham students.

**The 2014 Contributor of the Year was Ruth Winett,  
President of the Framingham Library Foundation.**



Ruth has been the driving force in raising funds for the new McAuliffe branch library in Nobscot. Securing funds from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners led to the approval by Town Meeting of the land purchase and building construction financing for a new branch library. Ruth organized events to get community support and contributions for the project. These efforts have enabled the foundation to raise more than \$500,000 toward the goal of \$600,000. Her involvement and commitment to our community is greatly appreciated.



**The 2013 Contributor of the Year was Anne Murphy.  
Executive Director of the Framingham History Center.**

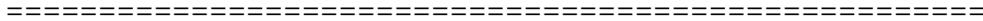


Annie Murphy's leadership has transformed the Historical Society of 1888 into the widely attended Framingham History Center of today. Facilities have been restored and upgraded. Innovative programs introduce old collections in new ways and new exhibits highlight the old. Under Annie's leadership the Framingham History Center has established stewardship of three of Framingham's most significant historic buildings, The Academy, Village Hall, and the Edgell Memorial Library.

**The 2012 Contributor of the Year was State Senator Karen E. Spilka,  
State Senator since January, 2005.**



Senator Karen E. Spilka has established herself as a respected leader in state government. She was awarded the Framingham Cultural Council's 2012 Contributor of the Year Award for her leadership and support of cultural activities and for her work in establishing the MetroWest Tourism & Visitors Bureau.



**The 2011 Contributor of the Year was Robert Merusi,  
Director of the Town of Framingham Parks and Recreation Division.**

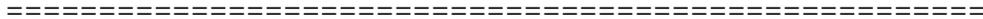


Bob Merusi has been instrumental in the improvement and development of numerous Park properties including Cushing Park and the new Bowditch Field Athletic and Cultural Complex and the Callahan Senior Center. A true leader in the community, Bob's dedication and commitment to the Town has truly improved the quality of life for its citizens.

**The 2010 Contributor of the Year was John Steacie,  
Former Member and Chair of the Framingham Cultural Council.**



John Steacie has been a dedicated leader of the Framingham Cultural Council and worked on numerous arts project in the Town of Framingham including the START Partnership and the Downtown Renaissance Projects.



**The 2009 Contributor of the Year was Michael Moran,  
Founder of the Amazing Things Arts Center.**



Michael Moran demonstrated drive and dedication to the arts as he established the Amazing Things Arts Center in Framingham.