



2020 Gary A. LaGrange Community Impact Award Recipient Katie Hallman

As a public-school nurse Katie Hallman, works primarily with Pre-K and elementary-age children at Mallett School in Farmington. Katie is known for jumping to the aid of thousands of children over her career who have food insecurities, injuries, disabilities, and illness. Katie has offered countless education-based opportunities for families, such as training for proper usage of Epi-pens, seizure management, and other on-site supports for parents and grandparents. She has procured grant funding to purchase Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) for children and staff experiencing life-threatening heart problems.

Katie is also heavily involved in the *Girl's State* program, influencing the lives of an estimated forty to fifty local young women over the years.

This tireless advocate for children was key in establishing the annual Mallett Yard Sale, which raises money to give students a chance to attend the local summer camp or summer program.

A patriot, she also is a leader in the Emblem Club and the Ladies Auxiliary of the Legion, to provide American flags to schools. She devotes major time to the local food pantry at Mallett, that has been going strong for nearly four years. She has been known to go as far as calling individuals whom she knows are in need and has her husband Bob make deliveries if transportation or illness is ever an issue.

In nominating Katie for this award, it was noted that, "Her efforts within the school/community ripple outward. We hope that Katie's value to our community can be recognized with this very special award. I can't think of a more deserving person."

2020 Honorees

Shelly Gervais

Shelly Gervais, owner of Shelly's Hometown Market in Wilton, ME, has been known to go above and beyond with regards to donations and fundraising for a plethora of community events. To give back to the community, Shelly utilizes her Market to create what she calls "Red Fridays," where her team chooses a new charity to donate to *every week*. Shelly often donates food, and volunteers her time giving back to Franklin County.

Chris and Bri Bracy

Owners of the new Downtown Press, located in Farmington Maine, Chris & Bri Bracy are being recognized for their community spirit and providing menus that serve healthy alternatives. They are one of the only establishments in the area that produces vegan options, making those with diet restrictions feel more welcomed. Their atmosphere is warm and child-friendly; if you visit, you will often find a group of children playing by the kitchen playset or having books read to them.

“Chris and Bri’s cafe has created a stronger community with its unique family-friendly environment. They revitalized a dwindling restaurant into a thriving business with healthy options,” said their nominator.

Kelsea Pinkham

Franklin Savings Bank employee Kelsea Pinkham is being recognized for her dedicated action towards relieving the victims of the tragedy at our local LEAP building, last September. With the help of Franklin Savings Bank, Kelsea was able to help those who were displaced, by aiding in finding residential accommodations, securing and distributing funds, as well as helping with the community dinners at the fire station. Families have since reached out to Kelsea to express their gratitude for her service and generosity.

Her nomination read: “Kelsea is eagerly involved in each community event put on by Franklin Savings Bank. We are lucky to have people in the community like Kelsea.”

Bud and Sarah Martin (Martin Woods Farm)

Bud and Sarah Martin of Martin Woods Farm, are being recognized for their community involvement with organizations such as United Way, by promoting funding events that give back. Martin Woods Farm hires locally, provides horse riding lessons, adult education, and is a generally fun place to visit. Their funding efforts with the annual *Fun Family Farm Day* held each September, raised over \$1,000 last year. These funds then went back into the community through United Way. Martin Woods Farms also hosts, *Farm to Table* meals for families, allows families to bring their children to the farm to learn about animals, and provides accessible horsemanship lessons to those who utilize wheelchairs

Mary Ryan

Described as an environmentalist, Mary Ryan’s dedication to the environment and the community can be shown by her over forty-year-long dedication to ERD (Everyone’s Resource Depot) and thirty-year-long dedication to FOWL (Friends of Wilson Lake). Supplies that may have ended up in a landfill have been recycled into usable goods at ERD, which is located in a room on the lower level of the UMF Kalikow Education Center, for families, students, and staff to utilize at a significantly lower cost, as compared to buying them at a store. Aside from ERD, her partnership with FOWL and concern for the environment, has led to a thirty-year assurance of a clean water supply from Wilson Lake.

“Mary has been involved in both organizations since their formation; she has played a leading role in both, and it seems appropriate that she should be recognized at this time,” notes her nomination.

Steve Muise

Nominated four times by community members, Steve Muise’s goal is to keep traditional stringed instruments alive in schools by providing lessons to middle and high school age students throughout RSU 9. He is the inspiration behind the Franklin County Fiddlers, a group of spirited high school musicians that have traveled throughout the Canadian Maritimes, Ireland, and many other places known for its Celtic and folk music traditions.

Steve’s motto is, “Don’t be afraid to be awesome,” a motto that encourages his students to improve themselves. For some, that self-improvement is giving back to the community. His

fiddle students raise hundreds of dollars at area concerts, including their popular annual *Home for the Holidays* concert. These funds are then distributed to support local causes and organizations.

Steve's work has led to an astonishing number of students going on to become professional musicians. Some have grown up to form indie-rock bands that travel across the country, and some have formed separate fiddle groups who travel to different colleges for performances.

"Steve is an amazingly kind and generous educator. His genuine love for his students is something rarely seen."