

NEWS

Beth Harper Briglia to be honored with the 18th annual Rebecca Lukens Award



Longtime philanthropic advisor Beth Harper Briglia was recently named the 18th recipient of the annual Rebecca Lukens Award. (Photo by Robert O. Williams/The Williams Group for NISHM)

By **FOR MEDIANEWS GROUP**

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COATESVILLE — Beth Harper Briglia, a longtime philanthropic advisor and community volunteer in Chester County, was recently named the 18th recipient of the annual Rebecca Lukens Award presented by the National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum.

Briglia, the former executive vice president of philanthropic services at the Chester County Community Foundation in West Chester, was identified and selected by a community-based awards committee.

She will be honored in a special awards ceremony scheduled to be held at Graystone, one of NISHM's historic mansions in Coatesville, later this month. The awards ceremony is supported by several lead sponsors including the Gunard Berry Carlson Memorial Foundation, PECO and The Stewart Huston Charitable Trust.

Established by the Graystone Society, the museum's nonprofit arm, the award is named for the owner of the former Lukens Steel Co., Rebecca Lukens, who is also known as the nation's first female industrialist.

According to Scott G. Huston, a direct descendent of Rebecca Lukens and NISHM's board president, honorees demonstrate the leadership qualities of the early Quaker ironmaster.

"Beth's list of accomplishments and accolades is impressive," Huston said, "There was no such thing as the non-profit or philanthropic sector in Rebecca's time, of course, but the three core values we always mention — Rebecca as a visionary, a doer, and a strategic leader — are qualities that Beth Briglia has also brought to her work in guiding others in philanthropy."

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Longtime philanthropic advisor Beth Harper Briglia was recently named the 18th recipient of the annual Rebecca Lukens Award. (Photo by Robert O. Williams/The Williams Group for NISHM)

James Ziegler, NISHM's Executive Director, concurs with Mr. Huston. "The museum recognizes Chester County women who have worked in a similar way as Rebecca Lukens. Beth not only inspires but works to make our community a better place."

In citing other traits shared with Rebecca, Huston said that many past recipients including last year's honoree, Mary Holleran of Downingtown, were honored for their work as community-builders. Briglia is no exception, although her work strengthening communities could be described as people-driven. It's part of her longtime work as a philanthropic advisor, especially at CCCF where she frequently worked with generations of family members who established nonprofit legacy funds there.

Describing herself as “honored and humbled” to be named this year’s Rebecca Lukens Award recipient, Briglia said that she has personally known several of the previous recipients and has felt a kinship with how they have worked to improve the lives of others. She said she first came to know the story of Rebecca’s life through Gene DiOrio, co-founder of the Graystone Society, who gave her personal tours of the Lukens National Historic District and the surrounding area.

At the time, Briglia was just beginning her work at CCCF and understanding how one’s values are connected to philanthropy in making life better for others. “I was inspired by her story and what she did,” Briglia said of Rebecca, “I was especially taken with the fact that she wanted to have her father’s legacy as founder of the steel mill to live on and she worked to ensure that the mill workers were well served.”

Briglia, who grew up in Montgomery County with five siblings, has had a long affinity with the nonprofit sector but she was encouraged by her father to pursue a career in accounting. She earned her undergraduate degree in public administration from La Salle University and later worked for Arthur Andersen & Co. She spent more than a dozen years as an accountant and consultant working in diversified financial service environments including asset management, insurance, and banking.

Briglia was able to make the transition to nonprofit work when she became a volunteer with Community Accountants and became intrigued with Arts administration by helping the Philadelphia-based Clay Studio, now the nation’s oldest ceramic studio. Briglia eventually joined the studio’s Board of Directors and served as board president.

Briglia’s 20-plus years at CCCF have drawn on her many skills including her training as a Certified Public Accountant and a Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy. However, she especially enjoys helping individuals, families, and local business owners engage with and improve their own communities by guiding them through what she calls “intentional philanthropy.” The process enables donors to consider their time, talents, and values to determine their charitable objectives and philanthropic strategies.

Beth, the mother of three adult children who lives with her husband Michael Briglia in the Kimberton area, now works as an independent philanthropic advisor. She frequently drives to Coatesville to advise the Newlin Foundation, a charitable scholarship fund started in 2010 at the Chester County Community Foundation by a Chester County philanthropic couple.

Briglia works closely with Newlin’s professional staff, the board chair, Regina Horton Lewis (a 2013 RLA recipient) as well as with a community-based board of trustees who carry out Newlin’s mission: to provide guidance and scholarship opportunities for high school students living in the Coatesville Area School District. Each year, a select group of “Newlin scholars” not only receive scholarship help, but according to Beth, are given educational, mentoring, and financial support from the college admission process through the final goal of attaining and optimizing their post-secondary degree.

Briglia is also involved in numerous volunteer activities focused on education, including those promoting the field of philanthropy. She actively works with those seeking nonprofit career and management advice; professional advisors looking to deepen their understanding of the philanthropic sector for themselves and their clients; and individuals and families who are crafting their current and legacy philanthropic strategies.

Examples of her volunteer work in education include serving as chair of Bishop Shanahan High School's Board of Directors and as former president of La Salle University's Alumni Board. She is also a co-facilitator of the Delaware/Greater Philadelphia CAP Study Group for the American College of Financial Services. She has also served as vice chair of the Board of Catholic Social Services in Philadelphia and as a board member of Junior Achievement in Chicago.

Briglia currently volunteers her time with the University of Delaware's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute where she teaches a course called "Intentional Philanthropy: Making Your Gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasure Count."

The Graystone Society and NISHM thank the following additional sponsors: Ms. Ruth Nunn, Piasecki Aircraft, The Huston Foundation, Unruh, Turner, Burke & Frees, New Heritage Properties, Mary T. Holleran & David J. Proctor, BELFOR, Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Holleran, Gawthrop Greenwood, Herbert E. MacCombie, Jr., Consulting Engineers, Patterhn Ives, Chester County Hospital Foundation, CTDI, Breuninger Insurance, Ms. Joy Rowland, Chester County Convention & Visitor's Bureau, Citadel FCU, G.A. Vietri, Inc., Freedom Village, William Dunleavy Inc., Alliance for Health Equity, JGM, The Episcopal Church of the Trinity, TMACC (Chesco Bus), Presidents Fund at The Foundation for Delaware County, Wegmans, Summers & Zim's, Inc., Edge Wallboard Machinery Co., Jacobs/Wyper Architects, Presence Bank, Mr. & Mrs. Michael Raysor, and United Way of Chester County.

The National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum is located on the campus of the Lukens National Historic District, at 50 S. 1st Avenue in Coatesville, PA. Easily accessible in the heart of Coatesville and adjacent to the River Walk, NISHM is open six days a week for tours. For more information, visit NISHM at www.steelmuseum.org or call the museum for additional information: 610-384-9282.

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