

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

NESHCo Announces Winners of 2024 Lamplighter Awards *Hospitals and Healthcare Marketing Agencies Take Top Honors*

Newport, RI – At its 34th Annual Lamplighter Awards, The New England Society for Healthcare Communications (NESHCo) honored more than 45 hospitals, healthcare facilities and over 30 marketing/advertising agencies for excellence in marketing, public relations, and communications at this year’s annual conference held in Newport, Rhode Island. This was the first return to Newport in over 10 years for NESHCo.

“When we think of this year’s conference theme, *Charting a New Course in Healthcare Marketing*, we are reminded of the nature of our industry – chaotic and unpredictable at times” stated NESHCo President, Jeff Steblea. “But what it also reminds us of is the importance of building long-lasting relationships – to learn and innovate together. That is the spirit of the Lamplighter Awards”.

The Lamplighters were established to showcase and honor excellence in healthcare communications throughout the New England region. Altogether, organizations throughout New England were recognized for their work with a combined 160 awards, representing **62 Gold Lamplighter** awards, **52 Silver Lamplighter** awards and **46 Awards of Excellence**.

The 2024 competition collected nearly 300 entries which were judged by the Carolinas Healthcare Public Relations & Marketing Society (CHPRMS), Georgia Society for Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations (GSHMPR), Health Care Communications of Southern California (HCCSC), Illinois Society for Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations (ISHMPR), and The Mid-Atlantic Society for Healthcare Strategy and Market Development (MASHMD).

The University of Vermont Health Network Communications & Engagement Strategies earned top honors as the Best in New England recipient with their campaign *End the silence on healthcare violence*. Recognized for their work on this campaign were Bonita Brodt, Elliot Bent, Roland Kielman, Annie Mackin, and Ryan Mercer. This award honors the outstanding achievement of a well-planned, exceptionally executed entry. The recipient is selected annually from the top scorers of the Lamplighter Awards.

In addition, NESHCo presented UMass Chan Medical School with the **Owen J. McNamara Award for Excellence in Writing** for the Featured Article, *They are heroes*. Recognized for their work on this campaign were Susan E.W Spencer, Senior Writer and Editor, Ellie Casano, Director of Editorial Services, and Jenifer Berryman, Vice Chancellor for Communications.

The McNamara Excellence in Writing award is a tribute to the late Owen J. McNamara, a NESHCo member who, in his career as a newspaper reporter and editor, senior public affairs manager at Boston University's medical center and author, set the standard for clear, concise yet

elegant writing that recognized the audience and context. McNamara also served as a writing mentor to several generations of NESHCo members.

Before the end of the evening, **Hartford Healthcare** proudly announced their commitment to fund a new scholarship in honor of Keith Fontaine. The **Keith Fontaine Lamplighter Scholarship** will recognize the legacy Keith forged in the region and his deep appreciation and support of NESHCo and the Lamplighter Awards. This scholarship is ideal for people who face challenges that would otherwise preclude them from submitting Lamplighter applications. That could include people who are new to the industry, independent contractors, or those with corporate budgetary restrictions. This scholarship will award one recipient a grant in the amount of \$1,000 to cover funding for submission fees, conference attendance, travel expenses, and NESHCo membership for one year.

The evening ended with the presentation of the Evans F. Houghton Award to David Reilly of South Shore Health for lifetime achievement. The Houghton award recognizes exemplary performance in, and significant contributions to, the field of healthcare public relations, marketing and communications. In their review, the Houghton Selection Committee remarked on David's longtime commitment to NESHCo, his "in the trenches" work leading teams in healthcare organizations, his leadership skills, and strong team support. This marks the 40th occasion that the lifetime achievement award has been bestowed in its 49-year history and the 50th anniversary of Evans Houghton's passing.

About NESHCo

For over three decades, NESHCo has served as the region's premier professional development organization for communication professionals working in the healthcare industry. The Society is composed of nearly 300 members throughout New England. For more information, visit www.neshco.org.

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