

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

Anne M. Gobi
STATE SENATOR

Worcester, Hampden,
Hampshire & Middlesex

Tel. (617) 722-1540

Fax (617) 722-1078

E-Mail: Anne.Gobi@masenate.gov

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Derek Silver
PHONE: 617-722-1540

2020 Katherine Erskine Award Recipients Honored Virtually

WORCESTER- **Senator Anne M Gobi (D-Spencer)** and **Representative Kimberly Ferguson (R-Holden)** joined the YWCA Central Massachusetts, the oldest and largest multicultural women's organization in the world, today for their 26th annual Tribute to Women Celebration honoring the 2020 class of Katherine F. Erskine Award Recipients who have reached exemplary levels of achievement in their professions.

The two were proud to present Cindy Purcell, of Rutland, with state citations for her nomination and work in the Community, Social Service & Government field. Cindy is a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor at the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, where she helps to provide vocational counseling to individuals with disabilities. She has more than 30 years of experience in Vocation Rehabilitation and Independent Living, and is a strong voice in the community regarding issues involving the rights of the disabled.

Gobi had this to say on Ms. Purcell receiving the recognition, "I am thrilled that Cindy received this prestigious award. She has been an inspiration to me and so many others. Her knowledge and work to make sure people of all abilities have what they need to live independently has been literally lifesaving."

"I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of the recipients of the YWCA of Central MA Tribute to Women 2020 Katherine F. Erskine Awards, and recognize their incredible leadership and contributions to our communities," said Ferguson. "I would also like to extend my thanks and special recognition to Cindy Purcell, of Rutland. I have known and admired Cindy for many years, and cannot think of a more deserving recipient - someone who has contributed so much of her time and talent - and touched so many lives through her hard work and advocacy."

When asked about the award, Ms. Purcell commented, “I truly believe in the mission of the YWCA to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace and justice. I am dedicated to helping people achieve their goals by promoting equal opportunity for all, and by providing kindness and understanding to help individuals to believe in themselves. I am truly honored and humbled to receive the Katherine F. Erskine Award.”

The YWCA is entering its 135th year of service to the community. This year’s celebration showcased the progress the agency has made toward eliminating racism and empowering women, and renewed its commitment to the city to be a leader in racial and gender equity.

For more information on the award and organization, please visit <https://ywcacm.org/tribute/>.

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