

Freedom House Honors Community Champions and Raises Funds to Advance Equity in Boston at the 20th Annual Champions of Freedom fundraiser

Dorchester, MA

On Thursday, October 6, 2022, Freedom House hosted its 20th annual Champions of Freedom event at the legendary Scullers Jazz Club in Boston. Back in person for the first time since 2018, the evening featured performances by renowned musician André Ward, awards presentation to extraordinary leaders working to advance economic, social and social justice in Boston; and 150 joyful donors, supporters, and community members.

Champions of Freedom honorees are recognized for their extensive work in progressing economic, social and racial justice; and the substantial impact that work has made towards advancing equity for Black and Brown youth in Boston. Katrina Shaw, former CEO at Freedom House, was presented the Legacy of Freedom award in recognition of her dedication to Freedom House throughout her 10 years of service; and the profound impact that her stewardship had on the staff, students, and families of Freedom House. This year's honorees were Bithiah Carter (President and CEO, New England Blacks in Philanthropy); Reverend Gloria E. White-Hammond, M.D. (Co-Pastor, Bethel AME Church and Swartz Resident Practitioner in Ministry Studies, Harvard Divinity School); Mark Touhey (Executive Vice President, Administration and Corporate Secretary & Chief of Staff to the CEO, Liberty Mutual Insurance); Pastor Ray Hammond (Co-Pastor, Bethel AME Church); Tanisha Sullivan (President, NAACP Boston and Associate General Counsel, Sanofi Genzyme); Tom O'Reilly (President, Pine Manor College); Katrina Shaw (Senior Program Officer, Liberty Mutual Foundation).

The evening was abuzz with intergenerational guests from diverse backgrounds and sectors across Boston; all showing support for Freedom House's transformational work advancing equity for Black, Brown, and Immigrant youth in Boston through education and leadership opportunities. Freedom House scholars were prominently celebrated throughout the event. In some of the most powerful moments of the evening, scholars shared remarkable stories of the challenges and achievements on their journey to college. Obstacles of housing insecurity and the difficulties of immigrant integration could not overshadow the remarkable academic and personal triumphs achieved by the scholars. During the event, student scholarship recipients from the 2021-22 school year were also recognized. In celebrating the presentation of these 10 scholarships to Freedom House students, Chief Executive Officer Charmaine Arthur remarked "This evening is for the young people that so many say is our future, but the reality is, they impact our present."

The generous support of sponsors and individual donors contributed to the great success of this year's event. All proceeds support Freedom House's in this mission to transform the academic and college-going identity of their community by working with Black, Brown, and Immigrant high school and post-secondary students to foster academic success and promote a post-secondary education as a tangible goal. It's not too late to support - the 2022 Champions of Freedom fundraising campaign is still open: <https://www.pledge.to/champions-of-freedom-2022>

About Freedom House

Freedom House is building economic, racial and social equity in our communities through education and leadership development. For 72 years, Freedom House has been a leader in programs and services that champion educational equity and economic opportunities for Black and Brown youth throughout our communities. We see education as a pathway toward economic opportunities. We focus on college access and post-secondary success to increase college graduation rates and career readiness by providing comprehensive services focused on holistic youth development to our students. Freedom House was founded in 1949 by Muriel and Otto Snowden as a catalyst for promoting equality for lower-income Bostonians; with an initial goal of centralizing community activism in the fight for neighborhood improvement, good schools, and harmony among racial, ethnic, and religious groups primarily in the Roxbury/Dorchester area. For more information about Freedom House, visit <https://freedomhouse.com/>.