

Roca celebrates year's accomplishments at annual breakfast

Roca's annual breakfast welcomed a packed house of local officials and supporters at the Intercontinental Hotel, including Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey; Glenn E. Martin, Founder and President of JustLeadershipUSA; Brian Kyes, Chelsea Chief of Police and President of the Massachusetts Major City Chiefs; and Massachusetts Secretary of Housing and Economic Development, Jay Ash.

"I'm a longtime supporter of Roca. I very much believe in what Roca is doing to change the lives of young people. Molly has done a tremendous job and she really is a part of the solution that was missing for so long," said Ash.

Highlights from the event included a panel discussion with Healey, Martin and Kyes, where they discussed the three biggest issues impacting the high-risk young people Roca works with —immigration, incarceration and policing.

"If we had to wear two hats—number one being police officer, then later, being federal immigration officer—we would not get the trust of our residents. We should not complicate our jobs by wearing those two hats," commented Kyes. "Trust is so important between police departments and the communities we serve."

Martin shared his experience on Rikers Island, a prison complex in New York City. He described the violent conditions of the prison, and spoke on the importance of changing criminal justice to focus more on helping young men and women get out of that cycle.

"I remember walking through Roca a few years ago and I stopped a client and asked him to tell me about Roca and what works for him. He said the very same things you heard. To me, that was all the validation I needed—this is a program that is truly investing in hope and opportunities. It's not another teenager learning how to survive in gladiator school," Martin said.

Healey, who said she truly believes in the relentless model of Roca, said that relentlessness is so important to building those relationships and helping to change the lives of young men and women. "By breaking down barriers we are able to create a new level of understanding and respect," she said. "We need to talk and learn from one another to see life through the experiences of others."

Roca also honored the winners of this year's Vichey Phoung Award, given annually to two participants who, through hard work and determination, have demonstrated substantial positive change in their lives. This year, the award was given to two participants—Kerry Gutierrez in the Young Mothers' program, and Emmanuel Burns in the Young Men's program.

"I was going through the hardest time of my life, but Roca was always there for me. Even with all the stress, my youth worker always tried to reach me. Even when I didn't have phone, she would find me," Gutierrez said. "Roca gave me a chance to change my life."

"Two years ago, I couldn't see myself where I am now," said Burns. "Thanks to Henry (my youth worker), Roca and my girlfriend, I got my life on track."

Roca's annual breakfast presents opportunities to offer financial support to the organization. The MassMutual Foundation has pledged a multi-year, \$1 million grant that was matched by additional contributions by Vertex Pharmaceuticals and Bank of America. These generous gifts will help support Roca's work across the Commonwealth, and provide more young people with the opportunity to change their lives.

"The MassMutual Foundation is proud to support

Roca in its efforts to help the highest-risk youth in our communities build a better future for themselves and their families," said Roger Crandall, Chairman, President and CEO, MassMutual, who served as breakfast chair. "Roca's work is truly admirable and their ability to consistently achieve meaningful results is a tremendous benefit to both the young people they serve and the Commonwealth."

Roca works with hundreds of high-risk young people every year. The organization serves 17-to-24-year-old men who are determined high-risk by validated criminal justice risk assessments and are not ready, willing and able to participate in programs or jobs. Using Roca's four-year Intervention Model, they help young men stay out of harm's way and go to work.

With its High-Risk Young Men's Program, Roca runs the nation's largest Pay for Success (Social Impact Bonds) project to date. The Massachusetts Juvenile Justice Pay for Success Initiative improves the lives of over 1,000 young men, while reducing crime, promoting safer communities and saving taxpayer dollars.

In 2016, Roca was privileged to work with 711 young men, with 76 percent of them staying with Roca throughout the year. 79 percent of those participants had no new arrests, and Roca helped place 270 young men in their tran-

sitional employment program. Another 185 young men were placed in a job, with 88 percent holding that job for six or more months.



Chelsea Police Capt. David Batchelor and Supt. of Chelsea Schools Dr. Mary Bourque.



Chelsea Police Chief Brian Kyes, Chelsea Fire Chief Leonard Albanese, Springfield Police Commissioner John Barbieri, Revere Police Lt. Amy O'Hara, and Revere Police Chief Joseph Cafarelli.



Chelsea City Manager Tom Ambrosino, the Rev. Dr. Sandra Whitley, City Council President Leo Robinson, Eastern Minutals Manager Joseph McNamee, and City Councilor Judith Garcia.



Chelsea Police Chief Brian Kyes, with Matthew Shedd, Robert Barrows, and John Chirichiello, representing Bunker Hill Community College.



State Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Jay Ash and BHCC Facilities Manager John Chirichiello.



Shannon McAuliffe and John Shue of ROCA.



ROCA Executive Molly Baldwin and State Cabinet Secretary Jay Ash.



Sheriff of Suffolk County Steven W. Tompkins and ROCA Executive Director Molly Baldwin.



Chelsea Police Capt. David Batchelor, Supt. of Schools Dr. Mary Bourque, ROCA Executive Director Molly Baldwin, Senior Advisor to the Governor of Maryland, Robert Neall, ROCA board member Kevin Burke, and Chelsea Police Chief Brian Kyes.



ROCA staff members Jennifer Murray, Allie Maynard, and Sylvia Ruiz.



Guest speaker, Mass. Attorney General Maura Healey, Vichey Phoung Award recipient Kerry Gutierrez, and ROCA Executive Director Molly Baldwin.

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