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CHICOPEE

MASS LIVE

Chamber to honor Shining Stars

35th annual gala planned for March 6

The Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce will pay tribute to four recipients of the prestigious Shining Stars Awards on March 6 at its annual event to be held at the Castle of Knights on Memorial Drive. This is the premier event of the year for the Chicopee business community. The event will be held from 6 to 10 p.m.

Since 1985, the Chicopee Chamber of Commerce has paid tribute to an extraordinary Business of the Year, Citizen of the Year, Volunteer of the Year and Nonprofit Organization of the year by the Shining Stars Nominating Committee, chaired by Ernest Laflamme, Jr., the first Citizen of the Year. The Chicopee Chamber believes it is important to honor the organizations and citizens who are providing vital services to their communities.

Caolo and Bieniek Architects will be recognized as the Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year.

Caolo and Bieniek has been in operation since 1955 and under the leadership of its president Curtis Edgin since 2001. Edgin has been employed with the firm since 1987 when he was recruited by the original owners, Vito Caolo and Vick Bieniek. The team focuses on projects of all size. Notably, the firm has designed and executed Easthampton High School,

Davis Hall at Westfield State University, and historical projects like Lilly Library in Florence and Springfield Central Library.

Ruth Willemain, of Harmony House, will be recognized as the Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year.

Willemain, a retired schoolteacher and longtime hospice volunteer, began Harmony House with the mission of providing compassionate care to the terminally

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Christine Judd, left, is executive director of Roca Springfield, which will be recognized as the Greater Chicopee Chamber Nonprofit Organization of the Year. At right, Youssef Fadel, of Amherst, who has been volunteering with the chamber for 30 years, will be recognized as Volunteer of the Year.



Ruth Willemain, left, of Harmony House, will be recognized by the chamber as the Citizen of the Year. Curtis Edgin, right, is president of Caolo and Bieniek Architects, which will be recognized as Business of the Year.

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ill at low or no cost to the individual. Harmony House is currently constructing a Chicopee residence that will have five beds and host terminally ill individuals in a tranquil and peaceful environment. Ruth is extremely committed to her mission and community and is seeking additional community support to sustain Harmony House long term.

Youssef Fadel, of Amherst, will be recognized as the Greater Chicopee Chamber Volunteer of the Year.

Fadel has been volunteering with the Chicopee Chamber of Commerce for thirty years

and continues to service his community with a sense of humor and commitment to lightheartedness and fun. He has served on many committees but has landed as co-chair of After-Hours networking events. It is here where he melds his hard-working nature with his desire to be a creative, community focused friend and colleague. Fadel has worked as a sales representative in promotional marketing since 1987, presently working at New England Promotional Marketing. His involvement in Chicopee and the Chamber of Commerce has proven him an asset and friend to the entire community.

Roca will be recognized as the Greater Chicopee Chamber Nonprofit Organization of the Year. Roca works to break

the cycle of incarceration and poverty in young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are engaged in, and victims of, urban violence. Roca, now in Springfield and Holyoke, provides transitional employment access, skill building, therapy and support to program participants.

Chris Judd, executive director of Roca Springfield, has been with the organization since the launch of the Springfield location in 2011. Her commitment to providing transformative, supportive and life changing care and experiences to her participants stands unparalleled.

The Shining Stars gala is sponsored by Diamond Sponsor Westfield Bank; Platinum Sponsors Polish National

Credit Union, Associated Industries of Massachusetts, PeoplesBank, N. Riley Construction, Health New England, Valley Opportunity Council, MassLive, Arbor's Kids and Arbor's Assisted Living Chicopee; Gold Sponsors Chicopee Electric Light, Siddall & Siddall Law, Western Mass Home Builders Association and Bronze Sponsors CHH Engraving, Tru by Hilton, Residence Inn and The Hampton Inn.

The Greater Chicopee Chamber invites the public and Chamber members to come and learn more about the Shining Stars and their accomplishments. If you would like to attend, call the Chamber at 413-594-2101 or go online to chicopeechamber.org and sign up in the Calendar of Events.