



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 2019

PERKINS RECOGNITION DAY HONOREES ANNOUNCED

Honoring Massachusetts EOHHS Secretary Marylou Sudders

Lancaster, MA – On Saturday, June 15, 2019 at 10 AM, Perkins will hold its annual Recognition Day Ceremony to celebrate the achievements and accomplishments of their students throughout the 2018-2019 academic year. 23 students from across the state will be recognized. All activities will be held at Perkins, 971 Main Street in Lancaster, Massachusetts. The ceremony will also honor select individuals who have made significant contributions to the Perkins community and beyond.

This year, Perkins will recognize the following individuals:

- *Distinguished Service Award in the Field of Public Service* – Marylou Sudders, Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services
- *Distinguished Service Award for Service to the Students and Residents at Perkins* – Martha Bayles, Longtime Perkins Trustee; Associate Professor of the Practice of the Humanities, Boston College
- *Distinguished Service Award in the Field of Community Service* – Sarah and Joel O’Toole, Owners, Bolton Orchards
- *Distinguished Service Award in the Field of Service to Children* – Cherie Ansin, Director, Perkins Rein in A Dream

In recognition of her outstanding leadership and dedication to children and families, Perkins is proud to honor Marylou Sudders, Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services, with the *2019 Distinguished Service Award in the Field of Public Service*. Grounded by a degree in social work, Secretary Sudders has had a successful and diverse career dedicated to supporting and strengthening access to mental health services for people of all ages.

As Commissioner of Mental Health, she championed significant legislative reforms including insurance parity, patient rights, and children’s mental health. For almost ten years, she led the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, promoting the rights and wellbeing of approximately 24,000 children and families. She was also an associate professor and Chair of Health and Mental Health at Boston College’s Graduate School of Social Work. In her current role as Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Sudders leads the largest executive agency in state government, overseeing a \$22 billion state budget, twelve agencies and 22,000 public servants.

Martha Bayles, Perkins Trustee from 1995-2018 and sister to Teddy Bayles, a beloved resident who lived almost his entire life at Perkins until his passing last year, will receive the *Distinguished Service Award for Service to the Students and Residents at Perkins*. Martha served 23 years as a member of the Perkins Board of Trustees, including as Vice-Chair. She has always gone out of her way to support the organization and the Adult & Elder Program especially, maintaining a passion for creating programming that allows Perkins residents to remain a part of the Perkins community for their full lives. She continues to serve as a member of our Program Committee and we are very thankful for her service and dedication.

Sarah and Joel O’Toole, owners of Bolton Orchards, will receive the *Distinguished Service Award in the Field of Community Service* for their commitment to students in Perkins’ Adult Transition Program (ATP). Bolton Orchards has had a long partnership with the ATP, which serves 18-22 year olds transitioning from high school

to adulthood, giving Perkins students the opportunity to work in their store and deli. Each year, Perkins students interning at Bolton Orchards gain vital job skills to prepare for future employment.

Cherie Ansin, Director of the Perkins Animal-Assisted Therapy Program, Rein in A Dream, will receive the *Distinguished Service Award in the Field of Service to Children*. Cherie has served as the leader and heart and soul of the program for over 14 years. She is the ultimate multi-tasker who, on any day, can be found designing programs, feeding animals, providing lessons, coaching staff, encouraging kids, and shoveling stalls, and she does it all with great care, skill, and passion. Perkins is proud to honor Cherie with this award.

A luncheon will follow the Recognition Day Ceremony in Perkins' Janeway Education Center. Recognition Day is free and open to the public. If you would like more information, please contact Anastasia Caras, Perkins Marketing and Events Coordinator, at acaras@perkinschool.org.

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About Perkins

Perkins is a comprehensive human service agency providing academic, vocational, and clinical services for children, adolescents, adults, seniors, and their families. Their mission is to promote meaningful and sustained well-being for children, youth and adults facing educational, developmental, or mental health challenges. Learn more at perkinsprograms.org.

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