

Open Nominations for the 'Climate For Freedom' Award

In 1995, the Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council created its bi-annual "Climate For Freedom" award to be given to an organization in Concord or Carlisle to recognize that group's special achievement in advancing human rights at the local level. In order to meet the criteria for the Climate For Freedom award, the organization must have made an outstanding contribution in at least one of the following areas: advocacy to protect the rights of a specially disadvantaged group or victims of a human rights crime; reaching out and including a minority group in its programs; promoting cross-cultural understanding; or, promoting understanding and accord between parties in conflict.

There are two well-known civic awards, the Town's Honored Citizen Award, and Kerem Shalom's Vineyard of Peace Award. While these honors recognize the efforts of individuals, the Climate For Freedom award highlights the achievements of groups or organizations. With this award, the Human Rights Council fosters and recognizes needed social change that occurs at the organizational level.

The first award was given in 1995 to the Concord Police Department, recognizing its response to domestic violence and hate crimes. Next, in 1997, Concord Prison Outreach received the award for its innovative work with prisoners and their families. In 1999, the award was presented to the Cooperating Family Council of the METCO program for its programs bringing together the communities of Concord, Carlisle and Boston. The fourth recipient was Open Table for its successful outreach and programs providing social support and nutrition assistance. In 2004 the Domestic Violence Victims Assistance Program was the fifth recipient for providing victims, individuals and families, of domestic violence with counseling and support. In 2006 the Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council honored the Greeley Foundation with its Climate for Freedom award.

Human rights issues are present in every community. Concord and Carlisle are no exception. Local citizens and visitors have experienced the pain of hate and humiliation and disrespect, and the Human Rights Council works to combat attitudes and actions that threaten human rights. The Climate For Freedom award is a public affirmation to the recipients, setting an example for the entire community.

Any business, school or government group or non-profit agency in the two towns of Concord and Carlisle is eligible for the award. Although groups cannot be self-nominated, a citizen or another group may nominate them. The nomination process is simple and straightforward and relatively free of bureaucracy. Pick up a nomination form at the libraries in Concord or Carlisle, or the Town House/Hall, or log on to our website www.cchumanrights.org to download a form. Send nominations to CCHRC, P.O. Box 744, Concord, MA 01742, before Sept.21. The award will be presented at the Annual Human Rights Day Breakfast, to be held on Monday, December 1, 2008.

Name of Organization to be Nominated

Location

Primary Work

Individual Nominating

Contact Information
