



Ferraro Wins Inaugural Farash Prize

Farash Foundation news release

October 10th, 2012

Thomas C. Ferraro, founder and executive director of Foodlink, Inc., has won the inaugural Farash Prize for Social Entrepreneurship.

The prize, which carries a \$100,000 award to Foodlink, was announced Wednesday, Oct. 10 at the Dryden Theatre, George Eastman House before a crowd including the other finalists and their organizations. Alan Khazei, the nationally known social entrepreneur and founder of Be The Change, Inc., was guest speaker at the event.

The prize was established to reward the efforts of an outstanding social entrepreneur in the community, to encourage others to emulate those efforts, and to honor the entrepreneurial spirit of Max Farash, the Foundation's founder. More than sixty nominations were received for the prize.

According to Ferraro's nominators, he is "the ultimate food banker and social entrepreneur" who "saw a need for a food bank in our region before he knew what food banking was. During his remarkable tenure as Foodlink's leader, he has transformed that humble food bank into a well functioning, multi-faceted, mission-based organization that continues its work to transform its community." Foodlink, first known as the Genesee Valley Regional Food Clearinghouse, got its first real distribution center (donated by Wegmans) in 1988. Today, it is a 450-member organization delivering more than 12 million pounds of food annually to area soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, group homes, senior centers, and other nonprofit organizations in a 10-county area.

"We need to recognize how extraordinarily valuable our social entrepreneurs really are," said Nathan J. Robfogel, chair of the Farash Foundation's Board of Trustees. "These are the people in our community who are not content with the status quo. These are the thoughtful individuals who see that some of our residents are hungry, or lack transportation, or don't have access to neighborhood stores, or whose children need the right kind of daycare. But they don't just recognize the problem—they invent new and sustainable solutions, and then they implement them."

Other finalists for the prize were William F. D'Anza and Daniel F. Lill, founders of R Community Bikes, which has distributed more than 10,000 bikes to individuals in the Rochester community; Sister Elizabeth Anne LeValley, founder of Daystar for Medically Fragile Infants Inc., Partners Through Food, Inc., and Progressive Neighborhood Federal Credit Union; and William Lisi, founder of Asbury First United Methodist Church's Asbury Dining & Caring Center and of Asbury's Grocery Bag Ministry.

The Farash Prize for Social Entrepreneurship will be awarded biennially. The next Farash Prize will be presented in 2014.