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Hidden Heroes get night in the spotlight in Codman Square

By **Alex Owens**, *Special to the Reporter*

Nov. 24, 2010

The Codman Square Neighborhood Council held its annual Hidden Heroes Celebration last Friday in collaboration with the Four Corners Action Coalition. As its name suggests, the event — now in its 15th year— is meant to honor unsung heroes around the community.

Residents are invited to nominate community members for one of four awards each August--for Civic leadership, Neighborhood Leadership, Youth Leadership, and the Millennium Award -- for residents who have contributed to the completion of the Millennium project, an 80-page document listing a set of goals to improve the quality of life in Dorchester.

"There are so many members of our community that go above and beyond the call of duty, that don't ask for any recognition," said Cynthia Loesch, president of the Codman Square Neighborhood Council. "This is our opportunity to honor them."

This year's award ceremony honored eight recipients. The Neighborhood Leadership Award was presented to Jason Grantner, Dr. Unique Michaud and Nebulla Stephen. Grantner is a Codman Square native who works with the Building Services Department at the Codman Square Health Center. Between his maintenance duties at the Health Center, Grantner is an accomplished volunteer, working at such events as the Codman Square Farmers Market, the Hub on Wheels Codman Square Pit Stop and the Men of Codman Square Cook for Women's Health fundraiser.

Haitian-born Dr. Unique Michaud has been serving at the Codman Square Heath Center since 1995. He has worked extensively in community health, geriatric medicine and pediatric care, as well as providing time to patients at the Boston Medical Center. He has proven to be a strong link to the Haitian community, assisting with the Haitian Kreyol language Diabetes Group at the heath center.

Dorchester native Nebulla Stephen is a veteran of Breath of Life Dorchester (BOLD) Teens Against Tobacco, a Codman Square-based youth activism group, where she interned during her senior year at Tufts University. Stephen served as the coordinator of BOLD Teens and has served as a board member of the Codman Square Neighborhood Council since 2006.

The Civic Leadership Awards were presented to Shelly Goehring and Frank Hart. Born in California, Goehring moved to Boston in 1998 and served as the first executive director of Codman Square Main Streets in 2000. She now works with the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance.

Frank Hart moved from Philadelphia to Boston in 1989, where he became active in social issues in low-income areas in the city. He has volunteered with several organizations such as the Four Corners Action Coalition and the Codman Square Neighborhood Council.

Marilyn Forman is the recipient of the Millennium Award. A lifelong resident of Dorchester, she has been involved with youth programs at both the Codman Square Neighborhood Council and the Four Corners Action Coalition. She serves as the lead organizer at the Codman Square Neighborhood Development Association.

The recipients of the Youth Leadership Award are Jeffery Alkins Jr, and Annika Nielsen, seniors

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from Newton South High School and Boston Latin, respectively. Veterans of the BOLD teens, who have volunteered extensively around Codman Square, from putting in time at the Codman Square Farmer's Market as well as petitioning for more informative warning labels on cigarette packaging in Codman square stores.

The Codman Square Neighborhood Council is will be accepting nominations for next year's awards until August 20, 2011.



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