



City of New Bedford
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CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

Human Relations Commission honors Bob French, Zeiterion, and Hurricane Maria Relief Committee with first Human Rights Awards

New Bedford, Massachusetts– The Human Relations Commission held its first annual Human Rights Day Luncheon and Awards program at the New Bedford Harbor Hotel on Monday, honoring several individuals with the Commission’s Human Rights Awards.

Three awards were given in 2018:

- Robert French, former director of policy and development for NorthStar Learning, for his longtime dedication to improving the lives of children and families in Greater New Bedford.
- The Zeiterion Performing Arts Center, for advancing arts and culture for all audiences in New Bedford.
- The Hurricane Maria Relief Committee, for their collaborative humanitarian efforts to help those affected by Hurricane Maria, including refugees who relocated to New Bedford in the wake of the hurricane’s devastation to Puerto Rico last year.

The luncheon was held to commemorate Human Rights Day, established in 1948 when the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Mayor Jon Mitchell presented a proclamation to Human Rights Commission Chair Stella Rebeiro declaring December 10 as Human Rights Day in New Bedford, and City Councillor Dana Rebeiro presented a resolution from the City Council on the establishment of Human Rights Day in New Bedford.

The HRC encouraged organizations and schools to use the day to educate others on Human Right concerns within the community, but also to inspire and celebrate the advocacy that goes on throughout the year. The theme for this year's Human Rights Day was standing up for the human rights of all –civic, political, and cultural rights.

The New Bedford Human Relations Commission is a 9-member body, established by ordinance, appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. Its purpose is to promote mutual understanding and respect among residents, and encourage and ensure equality of opportunity for all people in New Bedford.

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