



Left to right: Jennifer Ray (community engagement director, MV Bank), Alley Estrella (Philip J. Norton scholarship winner), Jane Norton (wife of Philip J. Norton), James Anthony (CEO MV Bank)
Ray Ewing

MV Bank Dedicates More than \$600,000 to Nonprofits

Riis Williams *Friday, April 28, 2023 - 3:33pm*

Island nonprofits and community leaders gathered at the Carnegie Heritage Center Thursday to celebrate the hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants and scholarships given out by the Martha's Vineyard Bank Charitable Foundation.

At its first annual Community Commitment event, the bank trustees announced they had dedicated \$2.2 million in donations to the bank's charitable foundation, more than \$600,000 of which were doled out to people and organizations from around the Island.

"Thanks to the support of our customers, we've enjoyed over a century of success," said James Anthony, the bank's president and CEO. "That has allowed us to donate a significant portion of the bank's annual earnings in the form of donations to organizations that make life better

for all of us.”

To kick off the evening, Mr. Anthony announced Alley Estrella as the first recipient of the Philip J. Norton, Jr. scholarship, an award created this year to honor the late Edgartown town moderator and former chairman of the board of trustees for the bank.

Ms. Estrella was recognized for her community service and dedication to a future career in social work. She is from West Tisbury and a fourth-year student at Western New England University. In the fall, she will pursue her Master’s degree in social work at Westfield State University.



Martha's Vineyard Bank president James Anthony.
— Ray Ewing

In addition to her many service-oriented extracurriculars at school, Ms. Estrella said that she returns home as much as she can to keep serving the Vineyard.

“Every summer I’ve been able to come back here and try out a new field of social work so that I can figure out what I really want to do,” she said. “This summer, I’m working with kids at the West Tisbury School in the summer school program.”

The bank foundation also gave out \$5,000 community impact grants to four local organizations.

The Island’s Camp Jabberwocky and Island Grown Initiative were honored for their exceptional community engagement services. The other two grants were awarded to Farming Falmouth and the Woods Hole Child Center.

“These [organizations] are representative of all nonprofits in our community, dedicated to helping neighbors in need, protecting our environment and nurturing our local youth,” Mr. Anthony said.

The bank also awarded a collective \$620,000 earlier in the year to four Island nonprofits — Island Housing Trust, Island Health Care, Foundation for Underway Experiential Learning (FUEL) and the Martha’s Vineyard Fishermen’s Preservation Trust — to fund specific human needs-based projects.

At Island Health Care, the donation will help fund a much-needed new dental clinic.

“I just brought my kids off-Island to go to the dentist yesterday and it was a rough six hours,” said Shimmy Mehta, Island Health Care chief financial officer. “We’re just really happy and thankful to you guys and all of our funders for helping us bring a much needed service to the Island.”



Island Grown Initiative managing director Michelle Gittlen talks after her nonprofit received a community impact grant. — *Ray Ewing*

FUEL will use the donation to build a new tall ship for its children’s sea voyages, the Island Housing Trust will use it to help construct three affordable housing projects and the Martha’s Vineyard Fishermen’s Preservation Trust purchased a flash freezer.

To wrap the evening, Amy Levine, the bank’s marketing manager, introduced the bank’s new fundraising feature on its online Lift Store.

The feature allows nonprofits to conduct online fundraisers and raise up to \$20,000 without incurring processing fees.

“I looked at GoFundMe and their fees are 2.9 per cent plus 30 cents per transaction,” said Ms. Levine. “So luckily, we’re not asking you to ask you or your donor to pick up that tab — the bank is going to pay for that.”

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