

## **The Annual Recognition Lunch April 26<sup>th</sup> 2023**

### **Hosted by the Winnetka-Northfield-Glencoe Chamber of Commerce**

#### **Honors the following:**

##### **Man of the Year 2023 - Andrew Cripe**



Andy Cripe has served our Village beginning with his appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals in 2013 and then being elected a Village Trustee in 2015. Elected to be a Village Trustee four consecutive terms, Andy has devoted 10 years of continuous community service to our Village.

During his tenure as Village Trustee, he has also served as the Council's liaison representative to the Plan Commission, Landmark Preservation Commission, the Environmental & Forestry Commission, the Northwest Municipal Conference and served as Village Pro-Tem. Andy, also served as one of the Council's Stormwater Infrastructure representatives negotiating and voting to approve key intergovernmental agreements with New Trier High School, Winnetka Park District, School District 36 and the Forest Preserves of Cook County which will substantially improve stormwater management and solve longstanding flooding issues in western Winnetka.

Andy was also instrumental in furthering the goal of preserving historically significant homes by advocating for the approval of a density bonus incentive to encourage the renovation and preservation of these homes in Winnetka. Andy worked with the Council to encourage revisions of zoning and approval processes that would streamline reviews and expand business uses in our commercial districts. Andy was a strong supporter of the business community by thoroughly reviewing and voting to approve significant streetscape investments in the Elm St districts which improved underlying infrastructure and significantly enhanced the vibrancy of those districts.

More importantly, Andy has been a true steward of the Village, always listening to public input and concerns while finding thoughtful and creative solutions to multi-faceted challenges. His thoughtful deliberation, commitment to a fair process, civility, and transparency setting an example for future Trustees to emulate.

##### **Woman of the Year 2023 – Paige Dooley**



Paige has been on the board of the Winnetka Historical Society since 2013 serving as an ambassador for the organization in a myriad of ways. Winnetka has been her home since 1991 and she is very familiar with North Shore history. Most of all, she is dedicated to “saving” Winnetka's historic homes through her real estate business by targeting potential buyers who appreciate the historic significance. She also connects buyers with architects who can assist them in redesigning the interiors to keep much of the historic features while providing the owners with the layouts they need. She shares the village history wherever she can! She is a true asset to our organization.

In addition to her passion for the Winnetka history. Paige is an enthusiastic supporter of education and the schools in Winnetka. She has been part of the D36 Strategic Design Team and Citizens Task Force and helped organize the celebration of 100 years of Progressive Education in Winnetka. Paige is a past president and long-serving board member of the Winnetka Public School Foundation, past Fair co-chair of the beloved Winnetka Children's Fair and a passionate board member of the hyper-local charitable board Pitch Your Peers. Paige is a long-time sponsor of the Winnetka Music Fest and a band host family. But truly, as a top local real estate agent, Paige champions all aspects of Winnetka including the parks and all its recreation and is a great supporter of all the local businesses and restaurants!

### **Business Leader of the Year 2023 – Wendy Serrino**



As you might already know, North Shore Exchange is a place where you can find or sell designer and contemporary fashion for women and exceptional furnishings and art for your home – all at a great value. President and Founder Wendy Serrino has grown a luxury consignment store into a powerhouse non-profit organization committed to improving Chicagoland communities. Wendy has always wanted to help charities that meet the needs of low-income children, leading to raising thousands for international charities like UNICEF. In addition, Wendy is on the International Council of UNICEF and a past chair.

Using her business background, Wendy opened North Shore Exchange with a dream to offer a service where anyone could sell or donate their nicer things, generating enough profits to give back to those in need.

The biggest accomplishment of North Shore Exchange is in just ten short years, they have given over \$3.2 million in grants to nonprofit agencies serving the poor. Year in and year out (even during the worst of COVID), they were able to generate those important funds to help those in need.

But the best silver lining is the people they have met along the way. Inspired by Wendy's leadership, everyone involved in shopping, consigning, donating, volunteering, or employed by North Shore Exchange has participated in their mission of giving back and helping our planet. All a labor of love, to serve the neediest in our community.

Among her other accomplishments, she is co-founder of the Glencoe Family Partnership, a group of Glencoe families that funded \$500,000 for the start-up of a charter school in the blighted Englewood community. She also tirelessly served on the New Trier High School Board of Education as board member, vice-president and president.

## **Village of Winnetka Employee of the Year 2023 – Brian Keys**



Brian Keys should be Village of Winnetka Employee of the Year because of his exemplary level of commitment and leadership within the Water & Electric Department ensuring the safe and reliable delivery of water and electric service to the residents and businesses within the Village of Winnetka. Brian has served as the Director of the Water & Electric Department for the past 16 years, having started his career at Commonwealth Edison. In his current role, Brian leads a department of 32 employees responsible for the installation, maintenance, and operation of the Village's water system and electric system. Through Brian's leadership and dedication, staff has successfully responded to several severe weather events such as: flooding, polar vortexes and windstorms which have impacted utility services to our community. While most of us are comfortably in our homes during these storm events or polar vortexes, Brian is frequently on the streets of Winnetka leading service restoration activities such as repairing downed electric power lines and repairing water main breaks. As a result of his unwavering 24/7 commitment, leadership, and personal dedication toward providing this high level of service, Brian has been nominated as the Village of Winnetka Employee of the Year.

His community involvement includes: Brian and his staff are responsible for ensuring community events (including the Farmers Market, Music Festival, Sidewalk Sale, Festivities on the Green, and Holiday Tree Lighting) which are fully supported with Electric and Water utility services. Brian personally attends many of these events and is a trusted member of the Village professional staff and the community. Brian's staff is also responsible for the annual hanging of the Chamber banners in Hubbard Woods on Green Bay Road. Brian is also personally responsible for ensuring the holiday tree illuminates when President Rintz presses the "on button", bringing a moment of holiday joy during this annual community tradition.

## **Village of Glencoe Employee of the Year 2023 – Dave Mau**



After decades of exemplary public service and dedication to the Glencoe community, Public Works Director Dave Mau will retire on August 1, 2023, after 33 years of service to Glencoe, where he spent the majority of his 39-year career. He was hired in 1990 as the Village's Assistant Engineer and in 1996 was promoted to serve as the Public Works Director. For more than 30 years, Dave has epitomized public service and leaves a tremendous mark on the community. He has capably guided numerous significant infrastructure improvements, developed wonderful relationships with residents and has served the community with the utmost professionalism, kindness and humility.

Since beginning his tenure with the Village, Dave has been involved in countless public infrastructure projects and community programs which have significantly enhanced the quality of life in the Village of Glencoe. His leadership of the Public Works Department has been marked by the Department's commitment to excellent service in all areas. Projects such as downtown streetscape enhancements to stormwater management investments to water system improvements to street and sidewalk programs have totaled tens of millions of dollars in reinvestment in this community, with each project positively impacted by Dave's leadership, knowledge, and keen understanding of the needs of the community. His wealth of

knowledge and unyielding commitment to Glencoe has made him a fixture of our community and his absence will be deeply felt. Among many awards and accolades received during his tenure, Dave shepherded the complex Tudor Court streetscape project in 2020, which was recently recognized by the American Public Works Association as one of its Projects of the Year in 2023.

### **Northfield Park District Employee of the Year 2023 George Alexoff**



George Alexoff, Northfield Park District's Executive Director for over 20 years, retired at the end of 2022. Through George's strong leadership, the Northfield Park District has become one of the finest on the North Shore, providing quality parks, facilities, programs, and services. An open-minded, collaborative, and insightful director, George has upgraded and expanded district facilities with the purchase and development of Fox Meadow Park, the Community Center expansion, and major renovations of Willow Park and Clarkson Park. These projects have provided new fitness opportunities, expanded sports fields, added lighting, pickleball courts, walking paths, community gathering places, while preserving and expanding native habitats and wetlands.

George has been a proponent of the Chamber of Commerce and the business community. He made things happen from his very first days as the Executive Director. When several Chambers were looking to launch a new multi-chamber Home, Health & Garden Show, George stepped up and was instrumental in creating this successful event that was hosted at the Northfield Community Center for several years. Later, he joined the Chamber board where he served for many years. He was the Chamber President and an important team member of the Winnetka-Northfield Chamber merger team. Northfield is an even better place to live, work and play because of George Alexoff's contributions.

### **Winnetka Public Safety Employee of the Year 2023 – Katlyn Schmidly**



Firemedic Schmidly has been with the Winnetka Fire Department since July 2017. As a Firemedic, Katie's duties include fire suppression, extrication, fire investigation as well as serving as a licensed paramedic. Katie is the secretary for the foreign fire insurance board, assists with the Department's EMS program, is a CPR instructor, and serves as an Acting Lieutenant on the Engine when the regular officer is on scheduled time off.

In Katie's time with the Department, she has received multiple Departmental Awards. In the last two years, she has received 2 lifesaving awards. The Lifesaving/Heroism Award is the highest level of recognition and is awarded to the members who distinguished themselves and brought merit to the Department by a highly credible or unusual act of heroism or bravery.

Last March, Katie responded on Engine 28 to the Tower Road pier for a report of two subjects drowning in Lake Michigan. When the Fire Department arrived, there was one victim and two police officers in the water attempting to keep the victim's head above the water line. Firemedic Katlyn Schmidly immediately jumped into the lake to assist. using floatation devices and ladder, Firemedic Schmidly was able to remove the hypothermic drowning

subject and both officers from the lake. The actions taken by Firemedic Schmidly demonstrated exceptional courage and selflessness as she risked her own life to save the lives of others.

### **Public Safety Director Cary Lewandowski**



Public Safety Director Cary Lewandowski was hired to lead the Glencoe Public Safety Department in 2013 after serving more than 27 years with the Lincolnwood Police Department. After a 37-year career in law enforcement, he will retire on September 1 this year. Chief Lewandowski has led the Public Safety Department with great care and steadiness, in both times of great successes and through unthinkable challenges, including the Village's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the tragic Highland Park shooting. In everything he does, Cary serves with great integrity and selflessness.

In all he does, the public's well-being is his first priority. During his time in Glencoe, Chief Lewandowski has had a tremendous impact on the Village, overseeing the training and professional development of new Public Safety Officers and Lieutenants who continue the Department's legacy of exceptional service; expanded relationships with organizations in the community; and, managed day-to-day Public Safety operations. In particular, Chief Lewandowski has worked hard to build upon relationships with neighboring communities, and other units of government, most especially Glencoe School District 35 as well as our many houses of worship and cultural institutions. He is committed to mutual aid networks which enhance safety in our region and has been a friend and mentor to many in the law enforcement profession. In all that he has done, he models exceptional integrity, transparency, and commitment to serving others. As both a public safety professional, and as a person committed to Glencoe, Cary will be missed deeply when he retires on September 1.