



19 Carter, in Berlin.

Berlin's 19 Carter honored with 'Good Neighbor Award'

BOSTON — 19 Carter, in Berlin, was honored with the "Good Neighbor Award" at the 38th annual Champions of Arts Awards, held at the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School and hosted by the nonprofit organization Arts Learning.

This award recognizes organizations that go above and beyond to provide logistical, technical, moral, or financial support for arts education to thrive in their communities. 19 Carter was one of 14 award recipients celebrated that evening.

Dr. Tom Reynolds, interim executive director of arts learning, praised 19 Carter for its innovative approach to community engagement through the arts.

"What the folks at 19 Carter have created is a new way of the arts connecting people within a thriving community space," Reynolds said. "They have taken our focus on the value of education in the arts to the next level by creating a space for everyone to participate — from concerts to art displays to open mics and jazz jams, open art studios and book groups. I see it as the way of the future."

Introducing 19 Carter's Executive Director Evy Dueck to the stage was Tom Desmond, who is leading efforts to transform the Hudson National Guard Armory into a performing arts and cultural center (ArmoryOnTheAssabet.org).



Evy Dueck with the Arts Learning Good Neighbor Award.

Photo for The Item

"I was amazed at what she had accomplished, transforming an old church into a vibrant community center that emphasizes community, culture, and fellowship," Desmond said. "Evy has embarked on what some might call a crusade — sharing her experience with like-minded citizens focused on preserving history, engaging communities, and bringing art and culture together to strengthen our connections with one another."

Accepting the award on behalf of 19 Carter, Dueck noted that the mission of "creating conditions for connecting" is the basis for this unique gathering space and has resulted in thousands of people connecting with each other through

conversation, culture and the arts.

"All of our programs are led by local community members eager to share their knowledge and creativity with others. We are honored to receive this award acknowledging this unique approach and hope our success can inspire others to do the same," Dueck said.

Founded in 2008, 19 Carter began with a vision to restore and reuse the historic 1887 Gothic Victorian "Old Methodist Church" in Berlin, Massachusetts, for the benefit of the greater community. After 10 years of renovation, community engagement and fundraising, the doors fully opened to the public in 2018, quickly filling a need in the

community — providing a welcoming, creative space for people to gather, connect and participate in the arts.

In 2024, this gathering place, devoted to creating conditions for connecting, welcomed 14,000 visitors from 79 towns across Massachusetts and beyond. In addition to regular daytime hours, 214 evening and weekend events were hosted.

Daytime activities include community coffee hours, tea time, afternoon games, local art exhibits and sales, old time music sessions, book clubs, wellness programs, meditation, fiber arts gatherings and open art studios.

Evening and weekend programs feature live music concerts, weekly Irish Sessions, monthly open mics for music and comedy, Jazz Jams, movie nights, Armchair Traveler talks, History Matters presentations, Braver Angels workshops and local information sessions.

Since opening, 19 Carter has inspired community leaders in other towns to explore the reuse of historic buildings for arts and cultural gathering spaces. The organization regularly hosts workshops to share their journey and expertise in restoring historic spaces to foster community connection.

For more information, visit 19Carter.org, follow on Facebook and Instagram @19CarterCommunity, or email info@19carter.org.