

May 20, 2026

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Thank you. I am overwhelmed with all of this. You know, when Cathy stopped by to tell me I was chosen for this year's Founder's Day Award, I literally did not know what to say. That's not often the case with lawyers, but really, I was shocked. The only word I could muster, and Cathy will back me up on this, was "ME?" How do I deserve a Founder's Day award? And even more of an issue for me, I'm not one for all of the attention! Just yesterday, Cathy called me, just to ask "How are you doing? Ready for tomorrow?", and I jokingly said, "NO, I'm not". But here I am, so very honored to be named recipient of this year's recipient of the Founder's Day award. And so very grateful.

You've already heard a lot about me, maybe even a little too much – thank you, Lenore! I decided I wanted to just take a moment and tell you what this award means **TO ME**, what it means **to me** to be a Founder. When I look at that list of Founder's Day award recipients, I see folks who seem very different from each other. We have politicians, community leaders, scientists, artists, teachers, philanthropists, coaches, a whole range of expertise. So clearly this award is not just about any specific accomplishments, although surely those are important and indeed are to be celebrated. But it's more than that.

What I also see in that list is a list of people who all, in their own way, use their expertise, their talents, their skills, to give back. People who all clearly understood the importance of being engaged, being involved, of giving back to their communities – indeed of following the example of **our Founders**, Pierpoint and Abigail Bacon.

Think about it. Coach Shea, he's on that list, he clearly gave back through his coaching and the standards of athletic achievement that he left for us and that we all cherish; Calvin Fletcher - he gives back by establishing and now serving as Executive Director of the African American History Museum that he established in memory of his parents. Steve Bradstreet – he's here today. Steve, you give back through your work in the community and especially by curating the Facebook page "You know you grew up in Colchester when. – a page that is enjoyed by people worldwide; a page that connects Colchester-connected people worldwide.

And of course, the exemplar of a modern-day founder who gives back, Dolores Sawchuk. Class of 1948. Dolores, with your determination and dedication you make sure we all support Bacon Academy and that we recognize and appreciate all that is Bacon Academy and all that it stands for. You give back so much and in so many ways. On behalf of everyone who has a special place in their heart for Bacon, we thank you.

So for me, this day is not so much a celebration of accomplishments, but it really is celebration of GIVING BACK, and how Bacon Academy, with its heritage, its traditions, its lesson for all of us on the importance of service and giving back, has impacted our lives.

And if I may, a few words to our most important guests that are here today - the students. To the students I say - you are not just high school students. You are Bacon Academy high school students. You attend not just *another* high school, but a school that was founded by special people, by people who knew what it meant to give back. And through their generosity, you become a part of Bacon Academy 's heritage of creating community leaders,

So I ask each of you, and I don't care if you're or become artist, a scientist, a politician, a doctor, a lawyer, whatever you are and whatever you do, find a way to give back, to keep that heritage alive. A life that is focused only on personal endeavors, on just "getting ahead", on selfish pursuits — that's not the life exemplified by Pierpoint and Abigail Bacon and or Bacon Academy's founders. What sets them apart, what made them founders what makes the founders that we celebrate today, is that they gave back and still gave back. Through the founders' work and contributions, generations of students that they would never know all benefit. Use their example, accept their challenge, ,GIVE BACK and be a Founder of the future.

To "wrap" this up: I am so grateful, for this recognition, so very humbled when I think of being included in that list of founders and Founder's Day Award recipients. Let me just name a few specific people to thank – my parents, of course, who raised me in a tradition of service , my brother – thank you for your support – and I also want to thank someone else who unfortunately is not here with us anymore, but whose spirit remains a force in this Town. I'm talking about former first Selectman Jenny Contois – a friend, a mentor to me throughout my years of service, I still miss her early morning phone calls, and I am grateful for her example of service and the impact one person can have.

And thank you to all of YOU, not only for being here and for this award, but also for allowing me to be a small part of the legacy of service that is Bacon Academy.