

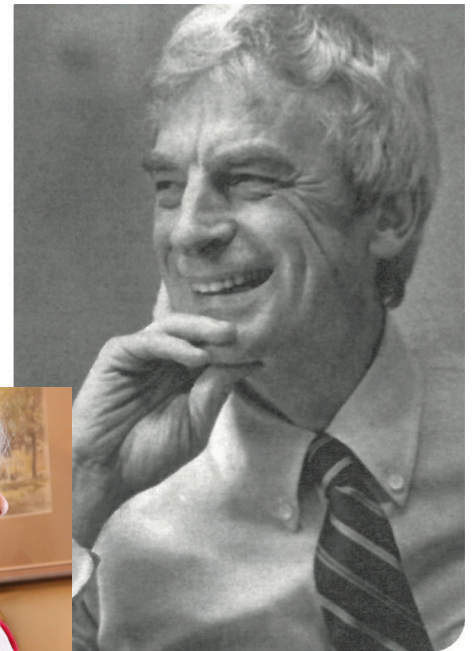


SCARSDALE OFFICIAL Village Newsletter

The Dr. Thomas Sobol Service Award was created by his friends and colleagues after his passing to honor former Scarsdale Schools Superintendent (1971-87) and New York State Commissioner of Education (1987-95) Sobol's legacy by recognizing one Village and one School employee for meritorious service to the community in the areas of mental health and well-being.

During his time in Scarsdale, Dr. Sobol played a key role in founding the Scarsdale Community Youth Services Project (YSP), a unique collaboration between the Village of Scarsdale and the School District. Administered by Scarsdale Edgemont Family Counseling Services (SFCS), YSP has significantly contributed to the well-being of middle and high school students. SFCS Board President Janice Starr called the program "unparalleled," and noted it is "respected by many other communities as a model to bringing excellent mental health services to our students."

The service award, following that model of collaboration, was first presented in 2016 to Christopher O'Brien (Village) and



Harriet Sobol and Dr. Thomas Sobol

Chris Renino (School) and was given again in 2018 (Mary Lou McClure and Maggie Favretti) and 2019 (Sammy Amoia and Luis Marino). 2024 marks the fourth time the honor has been bestowed upon village and school employees to those who, according to Starr, "go beyond their job descriptions to care for all they come in contact with" and

who “embrace the values we cherish in our community.”

This year’s recipients are Christine Sciandra (Village) and Eleanor Landau (School). They were honored at a luncheon at Wayside Cottage on Wednesday, October 9.

SFCS Executive Director Jay Genova noted that the location of the award ceremony has great historical significance as the Scarsdale Women’s Club met at Wayside Cottage in April of 1920 to address community needs, which led to the founding of SFCS. Though the needs of the community have evolved over the decades, Genova said the goal remains to the same: “To make sure our families are well-cared for.”

“In a time where it’s sometimes difficult to feel really good and to feel really special there are times where we can gather for events like the Thomas Sobol Service Award and acknowledge people that have gone above and beyond their day-to-day duties, people like Eleanor Landau and Christine Sciandra, who do things quietly and without the need for recognition,” Genova said. “It’s such a special time to have that oppor-



Christine Sciandra, Village of Scarsdale

tunity to recognize all your great work.”

While Sciandra has many public-facing duties, including fielding questions about meeting agendas, coordinating the lobby display board and inviting residents to community events, it’s what she does behind the scenes in the Village Manager’s Office that sets her apart. Village Manager Alex Marshall said Sciandra “is truly the glue that holds us together,” and upon hearing about the Sobol Award from Genova, Marshall immediately thought of Sciandra, who has



worked tirelessly in Scarsdale since 2008.

“Her knowledge about Village events and initiatives has been invaluable,” Marshall said. “She always remembers the important details about programs, or agreements that need to be renewed, and she always makes sure that people get a call back.”

Marshall said Sciandra “is the definition of someone who goes above and beyond for others,” noting that there is always a smile attached.

“When the Village experienced staffing challenges during the ‘great resignation’ a few years ago, Christine, without hesitation, asked if there was more that she could take on, both within our department and even when it came to other departments who needed help,” Marshall said. “I’m always impressed with how patiently Christine interacts with the public, even when they aren’t exhibiting the most patience with her.”

Two years ago, Sciandra revived the Village’s Employee Wellness Committee. Under her leadership there has been a walking challenge and, for balance, a baking competition. She coordinates speakers for her co-workers on topics such as stress management and retirement planning, and organized a voluntary CPR training program for staff.

“When there’s a birthday to be celebrated, she’s the first person to go out and get pastries or take someone to lunch,” Marshall said. “When a colleague or friend is experiencing a loss, she’s the first to write a card and say a prayer for them. I feel very lucky to have Christine as a colleague and friend and want to congratulate her on behalf of all our Village Staff on her nomination for this award.”



Eleanor Landau, Scarsdale School District

Sciandra noted she’s worked for four of the seven village managers in Scarsdale history, in addition to nine mayors and 16 village boards. She appreciates all of their hard work, the relationships she’s built with residents and the commitment to service that makes the village a “great place to live and work.”

Scarsdale Schools Superintendent Dr. Drew Patrick praised the boards of the School District, the Village and SFCS for their partnership, which he said is “what makes a community like Scarsdale so special.”

Landau has taught mathematics at Scarsdale High School since 1980, making her a “key fixture” in the department for nearly 45 years. She knows the curriculum better than anyone, and therefore can tutor any student in any course at any level. She takes the time to learn every course offered in order to achieve this and does it “with grace, patience, care and a love of mathematics,” Patrick said.

“Every SHS math teacher, and many of them are here, has stories about the wonders that Eleanor works with students,”

Patrick said. “She helps students prepare to advance course levels, communicates with parents about their children’s progress, explains math concepts, and addresses questions from all types of students, and crafts student-centered model problems and explanation on a dime...

“Perhaps most importantly, she contributes to student well-being by being that calm, reassuring presence that is signaling to all who work with her that yes, they, too, are a math person. Eleanor, I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this recognition than you. Your legacy was cemented long before this morning, but I hope that by receiving the Sobol Award you feel the deep gratitude and appreciation that we have for your decades of commitment and service to the students of Scarsdale.”

Dr. Sobol was a highly respected educational leader who made a lasting impact on both local and state education. Following his tenure as Commissioner, Sobol became a Professor of Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, until

his retirement in 2006. After his service as Commissioner of Education, Dr. Sobol returned to Scarsdale and joined the SFCS Board of Directors, where he chaired the Long-Range Planning Committee. His final report was widely praised for its insight and eloquence. In 2007, Dr. Sobol and his wife, Harriet, were honored with the SFCS Open Door Award for their dedicated service to the community.

Scarsdale resident Bill Miller had the initial idea to honor Sobol and recruited Peter Strauss and Carl H. Pforzheimer III to help him. All three served on the village and school boards and, according to Pforzheimer, “in common thought the world of Tom as a person and as an influence on his community.”

“After his passing we didn’t want his accomplishments, especially as they related to his deep commitment to bringing the deep resources of both the Village Board and the School Board together on behalf of Scarsdale residents,” Pforzheimer said. “We didn’t want that to be lost.”





Janice Starr



Carl Pforzheimer



Jay Genova



Alex Marshall



Dr. Drew Patrick

