

Maggie McRae Receives Extraordinary Service Award from Dewey Memorial Hall

New Staff and Board Members Join the Growing Dewey Hall Team

SHEFFIELD, MA, June 26, 2025 – Dewey Memorial Hall's Extraordinary Service Award was presented to Maggie McRae on May 9 at the Hall's annual Donor, Sponsor, and Volunteer Appreciation party. Beth Carlson, Dewey Hall's board president, and Wenonah Webster, vice president, presented the award with accolades from her co-workers and these words: "Maggie was integral in creating a strategic vision for Dewey Hall while handling the nuts and bolts of operating the hall. She pushed the boundaries of the organization while clarifying the roles of staff and board functions. Her clarity and problem-solving skills enabled her to create efficient, evergreen systems. Her ability to divide and conquer tasks made working with her a joy."

Several of the event's guests contributed in McRae's name to meet a matching grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund, which will support a Historic Structures Report and Master Plan. The Hall has been working for two years to meet the match, and the evening's donations closed the gap.

Past recipients of Dewey Hall's Extraordinary Service Award, include former board president Priscilla Cote (2020), Jean Chapin (2021), Neal Chamberlain (2022), Patricia Strauch (2023) and Phyllis, Dale, Josh, Ben, and Sam Webb (2024). Awardees are honored with their names on a plaque in the Hall, and a tree donated by Webster Landscapes.

2025 is a year of change for Dewey Hall, with McRae resigning as Hall Manager and the addition of staff members Olivia Sblendorio (Operations Coordinator) and Renee McBride (Rentals Coordinator). The board also welcomed several new members, including Guian Heintzen (former Managing Director of Citigroup, Coordinator of Rescue Efforts, International Rescue Committee, and Administrator, Save the Children Federation), Maura O'Malley (Founder and CEO of Lifetime Arts), Connie Griffin (co-owner of former Great Barrington retail shop Griffin), and Brian Healey (Senior Attorney with Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP). They joined Carlson, Webster, Maria Nation, Evelyn Battaglia and Fred Frayer on the board.

Recent elections voted in Healey and O'Malley as Co-Chairs, Heintzen as Treasurer, and Battaglia as Secretary.

"In classic Dewey Hall fashion we are honoring our past and the many contributions of an extraordinary team, and looking toward an exciting future with many robust new voices," said Co-Chair Brian Healey. "What never changes is Dewey Hall's commitment to being a welcoming space that promotes 'good and kindly feelings' within our community."