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EXCELLENCENORTH ALLIANCE PRESENTS “Dr. SYLVIO DUPUIS COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE AWARD” TO NEWPORT, NH, AND ENTREPRENEURS JAY LUCAS + KAREN BALLOU
Award Recognizes Newport’s Sunshine Initiative; Community Effort has Resulted in Economic Development, Revitalized Arts and Retail, Enhanced Opportunity

CONCORD – Positive energy inspires positive change and gives positive results. That is the motto of entrepreneurial couple Jay Lucas and Karen Ballou, who applied that concept to a three-year effort to revitalize the town of Newport, NH. The results? A renovated opera house, upgraded educational facilities and programs, relaunched local newspaper and a reinvigorated town center.

These efforts resulted in Lucas, Ballou and the town of Newport receiving the “*Dr. Sylvio Dupuis Community Excellence Award*,” presented by the ExcellenceNorth Alliance (ENA). Jay Lucas and this unique Newport economic development initiative earned the award because of the broad successes enjoyed by this collaboration of town leaders, business owners and citizens.

“As a native son of this community, it has long been my hope that we could revitalize Newport; all the ingredients for success were there, it just needed resources and new energy,” explained Jay Lucas, leader of the Sunshine Initiative. “I am confident that what works in Newport will work in cities and towns all over the state, region and country; and I would love to think we can replicate this success elsewhere.”

To that end, Lucas immediately announced similar Sunshine Initiative efforts to begin in Laconia, Rochester and on Manchester’s West Side. “Every individual and individual community has potential and deserves an opportunity to realize that potential; Karen and I wish to help guide that effort and raise the tides of success for countless communities in our state and region,” says Lucas.

ExcellenceNorth Alliance will join the efforts in the trio of communities and work with the Sunshine Initiative going forward. “The success tells its own story, and we are proud to recognize Newport, it’s citizens and the efforts of the Lucas family,” explained Tom Raffio, Chair of ENA’s Board and President & CEO of Northeast Delta Dental. “Creating a vision, purpose and values along while promoting legal and ethical behavior is a wonderful descriptor of what is happening right now in Newport through the Sunshine Initiative, and it’s a terrific way to honor the lifelong efforts of Sylvio Dupuis.”

The *Community Excellence Award* recognizes communities in New Hampshire, that through ingenuity and innovation, are making improvements that benefit economic conditions, quality of life, education, and/or public health. In this award, communities are not limited by boundaries and are defined as *a group of people working together with a common goal* to provide these benefits to a city/town, neighborhood, or region. The goal is to not only recognize these communities but to share best practices from these successes and encourage other communities to follow suit.



ExcellenceNorth Alliance also recognized Bristol Health, a community health care system in Bristol, CT, in part for its extraordinary work in handling the pandemic with resilience, agility and innovation. ENA's goal is to help other businesses, organizations and communities reach their full potential through alliances of effort and with the guide of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework.

"The development of this award exemplifies ENA's purpose to help Northern New England organizations and communities develop, grow, and sustainably prosper," said ENA Executive Director Anne Warner. "We see examples of how community leaders, businesses, and volunteers collaborate for the benefit of a community and believe that by supporting, recognizing and sharing these stories, others across the state and region will be inspired to do the same."

Dr. Dupuis celebrated the naming of Newport and the Sunshine Initiative in the first award of its kind to carry his name. "Serving others and making a real commitment to people and not things is the key to the success of these types of efforts," said Dr. Dupuis. "Having values and expressing a clear vision builds support which then builds capacity to make change and improve our communities."

The Sylvio Dupuis Community Excellence Award was sponsored by Bangor Savings Bank. Vice President Mamadou Dembele was on hand to present the award to Lucas and Ballou and to the town of Newport, NH. "These are the critical investments we seek to make throughout New England, and we are honored to be a part of the meaningful work to achieve excellence in our communities. It is very exciting," says Dembele.

ExcellenceNorth Alliance is the region's nonprofit provider of customized expertise in the Baldrige methodology and other systematic approaches. ENA has a forward-looking focus to help Northern New England organizations and communities achieve their goals as the rate of change and disruption continues to dramatically increase across all business sectors. To get more information on ENA and the "Dr. Sylvio Dupuis Community Excellence Award" and how to nominate a community in the future, visit <https://excellencenorth.org/>.

For more information about the Sunshine Initiative, please go to www.newportsunshine.org

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