

&gt;

By Adam Benson  
 abenson@norwichbulletin.com  
 (860) 908-7004

[Print Page](#)

October 23, 2014 9:40PM

## UCFS honors beloved 'mayor of Greenville' for volunteerism

NORWICH — Deb Hinchey may have been the first woman elected as mayor of Norwich, but she's not the only woman to have gone by the name.



PHOTO/ JOHN SHISHMANIAN/ NORWICHBULLETIN.COM

Olive Buddington was honored with the 9th Annual United Community and Family Services Palmer Davies Leadership Award Thursday at the UCFS annual meeting in Norwich.

On Thursday, devoted community activist and longtime volunteer Olive Buddington — affectionately known as the “mayor of Greenville” — was honored with the ninth annual Palmer Davies Leadership Award by United and Community and Family Services.

With her signature humor and quiet demeanor, Buddington called the 137-year-old nonprofit one of the region's most important resources.

“Anybody who has known me for any length of time knows how much I think of UCFS. I love that organization,” Buddington said. “I could go on for years and probably never find anything wrong with it.”

Organizers said Buddington's decades of public service, which included stints on the City Council and her role in securing a \$4 million state grant to build the Rose City Senior Center, made her an obvious choice for the award.

“Olive has donated tireless volunteer hours to many civic and community organizations that, without her dedication, commitment and leadership ... would have faced a major crisis,” UCFS President and CEO Chuck Seeman said.

A 1943 graduate of Norwich Free Academy, Buddington went to Willimantic State Teachers College — now Eastern Connecticut State University — and graduated in 1947.

She spent 37 years teaching in the Greenwich school system and at Columbia University in New York before retiring and coming home to her native Norwich in 1984.

“She was a mentor to many of us in public life because of her ease and her style of dealing with people. She's given so much to this community,” state Rep. Kevin Ryan, D-Montville, said Thursday.

In addition to receiving a proclamation on behalf of the City Council and official statements of congratulations from Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman and Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., the legislative delegation from UCFS' coverage area all signed a commendation for her.

Buddington, who remains active in the city and is chairwoman of the public parking commission, said she was grateful for the friends she's made while volunteering.

“The most wonderful part about volunteering are the people I met, and so many of them are here. I loved every minute of it, and I'm mad I'm getting old and have to cut out some of the things I've been doing,” Buddington said. “I just want to say to all of who you have made my life wonderful, 'Thank you.' You can't imagine how much it's been appreciated.”

As is tradition, Bulletin Editorial Page Editor Ray Hackett presented Buddington with a framed copy of Thursday's opinion page, which included a column praising her work.



Hackett, who's ending a decades-long career in journalism this April, was given a surprise recognition Thursday by UCFS. Hackett joined The Bulletin in 1988.

Seeman presented him with a cap and sweatshirt from his beloved Providence College, an engraved telescope and other gifts.

"Ray has been an advocate for the underserved, and pointed out in many columns that nonprofits aren't funded the way they should be in Hartford," Seeman said. "We want to honor Ray for his ability to bring education and opinions to southeast Connecticut for more than a quarter-century."

Hackett said UCFS has played a significant role in the community and was deserving of the advocacy.

---

<http://www.norwichbulletin.com/article/20141023/NEWS/141029731>

Print Page