

# Heroes of Character

## 2020



November 18, 2020 | Virtually

**MASTER OF CEREMONY**

Tyler Bradshaw

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

Michael P. Daly

Anthony Muñoz



# Character Council

*20 Years of Inspiration in the Tri-State Region*



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**Hamilton Caster  
Salutes all of the  
Heroes of Character  
and  
Student Heroes of  
Character!**



**Thank you** for joining us for our very first virtual “Heroes of Character”

Celebration and our 20th anniversary. These certainly are not the circumstances we envisioned for such an occasion, but we believe that honoring character is even more critical right now.

Character is a choice that brings us closer together. When we choose to do the right thing, no matter the cost; when we choose to care for our neighbors in need, despite our personal burdens; when we choose to fight injustice for those unable to fight for themselves, that is when our character counts the most. For 20 years, the Character Council has been inspiring the Greater Cincinnati community to a higher thought, a kinder deed, and the right action.

We are so pleased this year to honor two very special people who were instrumental in forming the Character Council: **Michael P. Daly**, our Founder who brought the vision of the Council to Cincinnati; and **Anthony Muñoz**, our original spokesperson who has made character development in youth his personal mission.

We also honor **three students and six adult “Heroes”** who were nominated by their peers as upstanding citizens and people of character and represent the best of the Tri-State area. They come from all over the region, from different backgrounds and walks of life. They are willing to do the right thing, no matter who is watching. They set an example of care and compassion in our communities. They may never have met before this event, but they are connected, nonetheless – by their character.

While so many issues threaten to divide us, our character - our humanity - is what we share. It is the determination that overcomes adversity, the compassion that enters when all feels lost. When we remove the barriers that threaten to divide us, our character remains -- ever present, at the core of who we are, and beautifully diverse.

Our special thanks to **Tyler Bradshaw** for his commitment to the Character Council- our Emcee for the fourth year in a row. A huge thanks to our **sponsors** for their generosity in supporting this event. This Celebration of Character would not be possible without the work of the planning committee, our **Board of Directors**, and all our volunteers and supporters who have a passion for character.

We hope you will enjoy tonight’s event. Our goal is that you leave this Celebration with inspiration to lead a lifestyle of high character and with great hope for the future.

Tonight, we honor and celebrate the character within each one of us that binds and makes us one humanity, one community.

With Gratitude,

Jacqueline Schmucki  
Executive Director

Mary Andres Russell  
Board of Directors

Dolores J Lindsay  
Board of Directors



## Good character is good business.

Our company and community strategies are guided by the same mission: To make people's lives better. We call it fulfilling life. And we salute the Character Council's 2020 Heroes of Character.

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# Character Council

*20 Years of Inspiration in the Tri-State Region*



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*Character...*  
It starts with me



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**Congratulations Heroes, Students, Schools, and Nominees!**



## **2020 Finalists**

**Below are the Finalists for Hero of Character:**

**Paul Beck**

**Holly Simms**

## 2020 Heroes of Character

**Michael P Daly**

Founder, Character Council

**Anthony Muñoz**

Founder, Anthony Muñoz Foundation

**Diane Adkins**

Hospice Nurse, Tri-Health

**Rodney Christian**

Retired

**Delmar Weldon**

Attorney, Pillar Law Group, LLC

**Marie Ausdenmore**

Mother and Adoption Mentor

**Michelle Moody**

Publisher, West Chester & Liberty Lifestyle

**Duane Moore**

Teacher, Hamilton High School

## 2020 Students of Character

**Samantha Fish**

High School Senior

**Lillian French**

High School Sophomore

**Luke Bresser**

High School Senior



## **Our Mission**

To foster character development in children and adults as a foundation  
for success

## **Our Vision**

To work with organizations in Greater Cincinnati to facilitate positive  
cultural change, contributing to a society in which:

- Individuals and families are strong
- Homes and streets are safe
- Education is effective
- Business is productive
- Citizens care for one another.

## **Character Pledge**

I pledge... to practice the character quality of the month, to take the  
high road, the higher thought, the kinder word, and the best action  
in my daily life, to uphold what is true, right and just, to be a model  
of good character for those around me, to operate with honesty and  
integrity in my dealings with others, and to do my part to make  
Greater Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky, and Southeast Indiana a  
region where individuals and families are strong; homes and streets  
are safe; education is effective; business is productive; and citizens  
care for one another.

**Character... It starts with me**



# Heroes of Character

Monday, November 16, 2020: Virtual Event Dashboard opens

Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 7:00 PM: Live Virtual Presentation

- inside the private Facebook Group accessible from the Virtual Event Dashboard

Welcome from Emcee Tyler Bradshaw

Jacqueline Schmucki, Executive Director

Mary Andres Russell, Board of Directors/Heroes Celebration Co-Chair

Michael P. Daly, Founder of the Character Council, Keynote

Iris Cole, former Executive Director

Anthony Muñoz, former Voice of the Character Council, Keynote

Break

Finalist Recognition

Heroes and Student Heroes of Character Q&A Panel

Gary Lee, Chair of the Character Council Board of Directors

Character Pledge

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# 2020 Heroes of Character

**Diane Adkins** is a hospice nurse whose compassionate care encompasses her patients, and their loved ones. Her Sensitivity and Empathy make her an ideal candidate for end of life care. She has been a nurse all of her adult life, with the last 17 years in hospice care. You would think that working in hospice, she would be able to check all of the good deed boxes a lifetime should have but Diane gives even more. She volunteered with her church and her children's schools and sports. She also volunteers with several community organizations such as Friends of the Library and Matthew 25 ministries. Through all of her life experiences, her Resilience is her strongest character quality. She has managed career, family, and volunteer work, all the while fighting her own mental health issues. She has always been open about those struggles so that others who face it will not hesitate to admit it and seek help. I have always admired her Courage and her Strength. She has been a Loyal friend for over 25 years. When she graduated, I gave her a small diamond necklace. I chose the diamond to explain how I saw her. A diamond is one of the hardest minerals and Diane toughness is the strength of her Character. Diamonds are beautiful and reflect light. Diane's beautiful life reflects light and warmth to all those around her. Diamonds are multi-faceted as is Diane. No matter what she is involved in, her Character shines through. - *Nominated by Jill Tomey*

**Rodney Christian's** profound faith in God has been his motivation to guide and mentor youth for over 20 years at Third Presbyterian Church in East Westwood where he serves as an elder. His leadership of the East Westwood Community Council in more recent years is rooted in a commitment to providing opportunities for all neighbors, especially for young people, and in ensuring that the voices of the voiceless are heard. He exhibits determination and enthusiasm in being a neighborhood leader, and a strong commitment to justice, education, and equity for black children and youth. Rodney was heavily involved in the 2017 NEP (Neighborhood Enhancement Program) in East Westwood and Westwood which brought together a leadership team charged with identifying projects and improvement opportunities in both neighborhoods. Thanks to his advocacy, a new playground, community garden and basketball court/recreation area were among the projects pursued and funded in East Westwood. When a group of black and white leaders in Westwood and East Westwood began working together in 2018, Rodney was one of the founding members. He brought his Faith, Persuasiveness, and Wisdom to bear in constantly saying that the work must be part of a movement, not a moment. His Courage and Perseverance has made possible uncomfortable but vital conversations to bridge the racial divide in Westwood and East Westwood. Rodney's Compassion shines through whether he is helping a young child to learn the history of their elders or standing alongside colleagues speaking out for justice and peace in the

neighborhood. -Nominated by Pastor Mary Carson

Attorney **Delmar (Del) Weldon** is an outstanding example of a “Hero of Character” representing the 36 Character Qualities on a daily basis in his personal as well as his professional life. His availability, honesty, humility, and compassion for others in his community are exemplified in his commitment to a number of professional organizations including his partnership in the Pillar Law Group in Lawrenceburg, IN, City Attorney to Lawrenceburg, and many others on his resume. His extensive volunteer and pro-bono commitments include Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Greater Cincinnati, Kiwanis International, the Lawrenceburg School Board, and the Redevelopment Association of Indiana to name a few. Del has experience many hardships and obstacles in his personal life including the loss of a brother to suicide and close friends issues resulting from drug addition, etc. As a result of these hardships, Del is involved in various non-profit recovery programs including CASA (Citizens Against Substance Abuse) and JCAP (Jail Chemical Addiction Program) originating in Lawrenceburg and the surrounding area to include the Tri-State. I am proud to nominate Attorney Del Weldon as an outstanding example of true character as he continues to benefit on a daily basis in his professional and personal life the Tri-State Area. -Nominated by Nancy Ray

**Marie Ausdenmoore** exemplifies so many qualities of a hero of character, that this nomination was an easy one. Marie is one of the most selfless, kind, and loving women I know. She shares her gifts and time with those in her family and outside of it. Anyone that meets her instantly becomes a friend. Marie has offered so much patience, compassion, and resilience when it comes to accepting children into her family from another country. Something like this can be extremely difficult and requires so much love and strength. She has given her kids a safe place for them to be themselves, and learn and grow into the people God intended for them to be. She also takes these qualities and offers them to those around her who have also adopted internationally. She offers positivity and patience to them as they share their hearts and their struggles, and then unselfishly shares her wisdom and walks along side of them. While Marie has battled some health concerns, she has never let them stop her from being generous to



those around her. Any time that anyone needs something, she is the first to step up and offer her help. She is loyal and dependable, and offers such a strong character to look up to. I believe Marie deserves this award so much. She is so humble and loving, and I would love to see her honored for all she does! *-Nominated by Ali Kinzi*

**Michelle Moody** demonstrates upstanding character through her unwavering commitment to improving our community. Her personal mission state of living her life “to reflect God’s love and light through my words and actions” is seen through her daily actions. Five years ago, Michelle left a lucrative career in corporate America to follow her heart and God-directed calling, to help improve our community. She started the community magazine, West Chester & Liberty Lifestyle with a mission to connect our community, be a voice for non-profits, and help our local businesses prosper and grow. This mission is carried out in the pages of her magazine each month. She creatively and enthusiastically works to find beautiful stories to share of amazing local people so she can give these unsung heroes the recognition they deserve. During the challenging time of this pandemic, she remained positive and tried to be a voice of hope and inspiration for her readers and advertisers. She launched the West Chester & Liberty Strong initiative, to show our community strength and unity while also raising money for the Community Health Fund at the Community Foundation of West Chester Liberty. She canceled all the stories originally planned for her June issue and instead made it the “Rebuilding Together” issue, with stories focused on helping our community rebuild in the midst of the coronavirus. Her positive attitude is one of the things I admire most about her. Anyone who knows Michelle, will tell you about her infectious smile and how she is always trying to lift other people’s spirits, especially in difficult times like these when they need it the most. During her free time, Michelle generously gives back to many causes. She sings in the praise band at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, where she has also served on the council and stewardship team and volunteers regularly. She tries to help as many non-profits as possible, and as such has served on the board of directors of many nonprofits, as well as helping with marketing and event planning for many others. Michelle does all this while also helping to raise our two sons, ages 15 and 12, and teaching them the importance of love, good character, and living generously by including them in many charitable acts around the area. *-Nominated by Mark Moody*

**Duane Moore** is a longtime social studies teacher at Hamilton High School. Duane holds a special place in Hamilton High School not only for our students but for our faculty as well. Mr. Moore is often the faculty member who others are drawn to not only for his perspective, but also because he is mutually supportive, respected, and

engaging. For years, Mr. Moore has chaperoned trips to Italy for the Wilks Foundation so it made sense for him to lead our students for off-campus college tours. As a building principal, it is always a concern when students overnight for various reasons. With Mr. Moore in charge I know that he will keep our students safe while ensuring that all students have a successful trip. I couldn't ask for a better leader and guide for students. Additionally, Duane is our Master of Ceremonies for all Pep Assemblies and other special events like our socially distant diploma pick up ceremony. Our students respect Mr. Moore a great deal because he is authentic not only in his approach to instruction, but also relationships. More so, Duane has a unique ability to reach students at their level while maintaining high standards and expectations. In the classroom Mr. Moore's topics of instruction are based on many of the societal issues that continue to impact our nation. His candor, perspective, and knowledge serves our students well as he helps them understand and prepare for graduation and adulthood. *-Nominated by Principal John Wilhelm*

## 2020 Student Heroes of Character

**Samantha Fish** is warm, funny, hard-working, honest, and brave. I served as Samantha's 11th grade English teacher for American Literature. After having taught over one thousand students, I can say, without hesitation, I have never met someone like Samantha. Samantha is a born leader, and I have no doubt that she will change the world. Sami has a rare disorder called Juvenile Myositis. It is a very rare disease that is often terminal in young patients leaving Sammie is incapable of moving some days. Sammie was constantly in and out of the doctor's office, but never missed an assignment for my class. She was always caught up on work even when she felt too weak to move. I can list Samantha's accolades, but it still won't do her justice. As a student, Samantha is the girl I could always rely on. She would answer questions when everyone was silent; she would ask questions when her peers would feel nervous. She became a voice for our class, and is a voice for her peers in our school. She is also incredibly kind and helpful to her peers. Samantha would go out of her way to work with students who were struggling. There wasn't a day that passed where Samantha would not seek out help and ask questions if she needed to, or a day that she neglected. She started a group at school to raise funds and awareness for her disorder. Samantha is someone who can handle the difficult load that will come with college level work, she proves this by handling the daily burden of her disease and life. She will also be an enriching part of the community you have created. Samantha's drive and dedication, balanced with her maturity will surely be an asset anywhere she goes. She is a person who knows what she wants, and will get there through dedication, intelligence, and the kindness that she innately possesses. She truly tries to support everyone she meets and do the best for all people. *-Nominated by Annemarie Clevidence Swingle*

**Lillian French** is one of the most compassionate students I have ever worked with. I had the pleasure of getting to know her as her school counselor in middle school and as

the moderator for student council. Our relationship has continued as Lily has taken the initiative to stay active in my life by supporting my personal kids and coming back to middle school community service events to serve as a high school leader. She has a true zest for life and everything she does, she does with enthusiasm and 100%! This can be exemplified by her ability to join pretty much any sport or club. She is involved with swimming, diving, gymnastics, cheer-leading, track, Young Life, and student council. She also babysits teacher's own children at no cost during school events so they can be more present with their students. At Turpin High School, as a freshman she was named the "8 Days of Greatness" Chair which is a week long celebration of the beauty of life. Her leadership skills are unmatched and her ability to be accepting and tolerant of anyone is obvious with her work with helping students with special needs in clubs at school. She takes the initiatives such as when she single-handedly organized a charity event that raised \$1500 and sent 3 local veterans on an Honor Flight. She maintains an A average in her school work while remaining positive during even the hardest of times. There is not one single student I have ever met who is more deserving of an award like this. *-Nominated by Carolyn Heller*

**Luke Bresser** is a student I have had the privilege of knowing for the last 5 years. What I most admire about Luke's character is how it relates to the relationships he forms. You can always tell that there is a genuine connection between Luke and those around him, whether it's friends, family or others. When talking to adults and authorities Luke has always been very respectful. He always gives a good handshake, keeps eye contact and holds good conversation while being very polite. More importantly though is the qualities he shows with those he's close to. He has an extreme loyalty to those he cares about. We have had countless conversations over the 5 years I known him. Yet I can barely recount any conversations in which he didn't bring up a family member or friend. He is so proud of others that he can't wait to tell you about things they have accomplished while almost never talking about his own accomplishments. He is also truly grateful for the things around him. He often talks about his parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins and past teachers that have helped him get to where he is now. He recognized all that has helped him and he truly is appreciative of it all. The way Luke looks at and cares about those around him make him the kind of positive influence every community needs. *- Nominated by James Tenhundfeld*

Alertness    Attentiveness    Availability    Benevolence    Boldness  
 Cautiousness    Compassion    Contentment    Creativity  
 Decisiveness    Deference    Dependability    Determination    Diligence  
 Discernment    Discretion    Endurance    Enthusiasm  
 Faith    Flexibility    Forgiveness    Generosity    Gentleness  
 Gratefulness    Honor    Hospitality    Humility  
 Initiative    Joyfulness    Justice    Loyalty    Meekness  
 Obedience    Orderliness    Patience    Persuasiveness  
 Punctuality    Resourcefulness    Responsibility    Security    Self-Control  
 Sensitivity    Sincerity    Thoroughness    Thriftiness



# Character Council



*20 Years of Inspiration in the Tri-State Region*

Decisiveness    Deference    Dependability    Determination  
 Diligence    Discernment    Discretion    Endurance    Enthusiasm  
 Faith    Flexibility    Forgiveness    Generosity  
 Gentleness    Gratefulness    Honor    Hospitality    Humility  
 Initiative    Joyfulness    Justice    Loyalty  
 Meekness    Obedience    Orderliness    Patience  
 Persuasiveness    Punctuality    Resourcefulness    Responsibility  
 Security    Self-Control    Sensitivity    Sincerity  
 Thoroughness    Thriftiness    Tolerance    Truthfulness

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