

A Role Model For A Life Of Purpose

Wall Street Journal bestselling author and leadership expert John C. Maxwell said, "Every person has a longing to be significant; to make a contribution; to be a part of something noble and purposeful." If we're fortunate, we get to make meaningful impacts throughout our lives. The reality is, though, not enough people have had the lifetime of positive impacts as that made by Ralph C. Martin II. A longtime public leader, business advisor, mentor and trial lawyer, Ralph has dedicated his 40+ year career to close gaps, build community and advance social justice. Eastern Bank Foundation is honored to recognize him with our 2022 Social Justice Award, as recently celebrated at the Eastern Bank Foundation Celebration of Social Justice.

Ralph is widely known across our region for his inclusive leadership, and advocacy for people and communities who have historically not been well-served. There are many facets to his leadership—every one of them important—and we are proud to not only celebrate his accomplishments but to be inspired and to help to inspire others to reflect on his example of building community with relevant lived experience, persistence and resilience that spans an entire career.

Watching his father, a New York City Police Officer in the 1940s and 1950s, experience racism in the police department, Ralph was influenced at a young age. While Ralph's father openly discussed the barriers he faced, he never wanted them to be an excuse or barrier to his children's success. He set an example for being curious by creating constant opportunities to learn about different cultures and ideas, in order to broaden their perspectives, be resourceful and find ways to overcome challenges.

Ralph pioneered efforts at the intersections of law, business strategy, public policy and government regulation, and applies his learnings to advance equity and inclusion. At Northeastern University, where he was Senior Vice President and General Counsel, he was a critical member of the leadership team that was instrumental in bridging town-gown challenges between the university community and surrounding neighborhoods in Boston. He is also a former Suffolk County District Attorney, having served as the first Black, elected prosecutor for Boston, Chelsea, Revere and Winthrop for 10 years, where he was credited with substantial changes in the way law enforcement



Ralph C. Martin II is being honored with the 2022 Social Justice Award from the Eastern Bank Foundation

collaborated with other agencies to improve crime prevention and prosecution.

He also helped to diversifying the staff of the DA's office and making it more accessible to the residents it served. During his tenure as DA, Ralph and other law enforcement leaders convened a community meeting for a local neighborhood with high instances of crime but instead of discussing crime, residents were more concerned with abandoned buildings and cars, broken streetlights, truant youths, and businesses closing. Listening to their concerns led to changes in the neighborhood, improved the quality of life for residents and reinvigorated the community. Ralph's powerful lesson about engaging with communities: rather than making assumptions about what community members want, listen actively. Lead with humility by setting aside your own context to better understand where others are coming from.

Ralph served two separate terms as Chair of the Board of The Partnership, Inc., the premier New England organization focused on workforce development for professionals of color at all levels of leadership. The depth of Ralph's impact in our community is partly attributed to his commitment to help open doors for so many and by doing so, he is helping to make Boston a more equitable community. He seizes opportunities to encourage others to advance equity in a variety of settings, having previously served

in leadership roles with Bingham McCutchen, as Chair of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, and as a Board Member at Blue Cross Blue Shield. He is currently a Partner at Prince Lobel, and serves on both the Board and Executive Committee of Boston Children's Hospital.

What's more, Ralph deeply understands that our most significant achievements in affecting sustainable change happen by working collaboratively. Indeed, the 2022 Social Justice Award was accepted with the acknowledgment that it is shared with the many people who work together to advance social justice and create better communities for us all. Working with a broad group of community partners, Ralph's enduring resilience and persistence to make a difference have created a living legacy of impact. Please join us in congratulating Ralph on his 2022 Social Justice Award.



Nancy Huntington Stager is a recognized leader in corporate citizenship and President and CEO of the Eastern Bank Foundation, which is named among the Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts by The Women's Edge. In addition, Eastern is ranked by the Boston Business Journal among the most charitable companies in Massachusetts, its 10th year among the top 10.