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140 local nonprofits gather for Cummings \$25 million grant celebration

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Boston Public Library Fund's Benjamin Wind and Paula Sakey with Bill Cummings, right.

Woburn, MA Around 300 people representing dozens of nonprofit organizations from Northeastern Massachusetts gathered at TradeCenter 128 to celebrate being awarded a Cummings Foundation grant.

A total of 140 nonprofits each received a portion of the \$25 million grant program, ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000. Cummings has awarded more than \$375 million to date in greater Boston.

“This is our absolute favorite night of the year because there’s so much joy in this room,” said Joyce Vyriotes, the Foundation’s executive director. “And rather than tamp down that joy with a lot of formality and decorum, we lean into it.”

Both formal and “fun” photo stations were set up for attendees to strike a pose with Foundation trustees or oversized photo props.

Boston Landmarks Orchestra representatives with Cummings
Foundation executive director Joyce Vyriotes

The highlight of the program was the reading of the grant winner names in a roll-call style by Joyce and Bill Cummings, with each nonprofit sharing a unique response. Many cheered, some threw confetti, others waved flags, and – to the delight of the crowd – a handful even broke out in song.

Janine Danielson, a CPA and partner with LGA, which has leased space with Cummings Properties for 42 years, spoke from the podium about being a Cummings leasing client. She explained that a large majority of all Cummings Properties’ buildings are owned by Cummings Foundation, and the rent goes to fund the grants.

“Cummings has been with us every square foot of the way, and basically added to our growth,” Danielson said. “It’s not only because they’re a great organization; it’s not only because they have great individuals; it’s that extra benefit that when we pay our rent, we’re a part of ‘the give,’ and we really enjoy being part of that give, and Cummings allows us to be part of that give.”

Joyce Cummings, who created the Foundation along with her husband, Bill, expressed her thanks to the organizations. “We are here not to be thanked, but to thank you for the work each and every one of you does day after day, week after week, year after year,” said Joyce Cummings. “And much of your work could rightly be called miracles.”

With a staff of only three, Cummings Foundation leverages the diverse experience and expertise of more than 150 community volunteers throughout its grant-making process. A group of active and retired professionals pared down 580 letters of inquiry to 333 applications and ultimately selected the majority of the 140 grant winners.

Letters of inquiry opened July 1st for the next grant cycle, which has increased to \$30 million.

More information can be found at CummingsFoundation.org.

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