



**Department of Planning and Community Development**  
1305 Hancock Street, Quincy, Massachusetts 02169  
Tel. (617) 376-1362 FAX (617) 376-1097  
TTY /TDD (617) 376-1375



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# News Release

**Thomas P. Koch, Mayor**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACTS: Chris Walker**  
**Policy Director**  
**617-376-1990**

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## **Quincy Community Developer Captures Spotlight at Two Regional Conferences**

In a span of just four days over the past week, “Opportunity Quincy” visionary, Melissa Horr Pond, was recognized as a thought leader at two regional conferences. Pond is an Assistant Planner in the city’s Department of Planning and Community Development.

The first recognition came in the form of an award at the South Shore Leadership Conference, held in Brockton, congratulating her on the achievement of “Outstanding Leadership in Strengthening Community” for her work with the “Opportunity Quincy” initiative. Planning Director Dennis Harrington attended the ceremony. With the award came an Official Citation from the Massachusetts State Senate, offered by Sen. Thomas Kennedy.

Only 16 months have passed since Pond launched the “Opportunity Quincy” initiative – a public services campaign, focused on engaging leaders to impact youth career pathways and educational success through collaboration, capacity building, and communication. Much has been accomplished during that time. By next month, more than 120 leaders from cross-sector organizations will have engaged with the initiative through ten events, including four service fairs, three focus groups, three capacity building training workshops, and a fundraiser walk-a-thon.

Additionally, Pond has infused the initiative with a social media strategy engaging an average of 120 followers through three channels with conversing on Twitter; sharing timely event details; grant opportunities; inspiration on Facebook; and collecting resources on a variety of related topics on Pinterest.

“We are encouraged by the new level of citizen participation and level of engagement from the community with this initiative,” said Sean Glennon, Community Development Director. “Moreover, we look forward to continued growth through this transformative capacity building.”

Pond's second recognition came in the form of a presentation she gave at the National Community Development Association (NCDA) Region 1 conference in Worcester, MA, alongside Glennon as moderator for the workshop, "Impact Your Community with Social Media: Empower, Motivate, & Activate." Region 1 includes entitlement grant communities from all across New England.

"We are very proud of Melissa's accomplishments and take pride in the fact that the Department of Planning & Community Development so often leads the way in shaping national models for community initiatives," said Harrington.



*Assistant Planner, Melissa Horr Pond & Planning Director, Dennis Harrington hold up Melissa's "Outstanding Leadership in Strengthening Community" award.*