

Finalists Announced for the 2021 Robert G. Wilmers Integrity Prize

NEW YORK, July 2, 2021 -- The Robert G. Wilmers Integrity Prize is pleased to announce the finalists for this year's \$50,000 award.

The five finalists were selected from a pool of accomplished candidates, each of whom is engaged in important community-focused work in the fields of education, the environment and providing critical social services, among other areas.

Many candidates for this year's prize – our inaugural award – were invited to apply after we conducted extensive research into the work they're doing and the results they've achieved.

"What a fabulous group of candidates," says Diane Patrick, senior counsel at Ropes & Gray and former First Lady of Massachusetts. "I, like everyone on the selection committee, would be happy if any of them were named as finalists."

The process to invite applicants and select this year's finalists were both informed by the prize's eligibility and selection criterion. That criterion includes an assessment of the type of work the candidates are engaged in, the character of the candidates, and the past and likely future results of their efforts.

"Picking the finalists was hard," says Yo-Yo Ma, a member of the selection committee. "All the candidates deserve recognition and all of them deserve to be winners. Even those not selected, we hope, will feel inspired to build on the impressive work they've already done."

"We tried to look past what the candidates were doing to discern why were they doing it," says René Jones, a founding board member of the Wilmers Integrity Prize and chairman and CEO of M&T Bank Corp. "It was important to us that they were doing this work in a selfless way and that, ten years from now, they will still be doing good work in their communities."

After careful consideration, the five finalists for the 2021 Robert G. Wilmers Integrity Prize are:

- Yasmine Arrington, founder and executive director of ScholarCHIPS, a Washington, D.C.-based organization that provides college scholarships, mentoring and a peer support network to children of incarcerated parents.
- Renee Fluker, founder and president of the Midnight Golf Program, which helps young adults in Detroit, MI, attend and succeed through college.
- Heather Lundy, founder and CEO of Khesed Wellness, which makes mental health and wellness services affordable for the underinsured in Denver, CO.
- Veronika Scott, founder and CEO of Empowerment Plan, a social enterprise that provides jobs and innovative coats-cum-sleeping bags to homeless individuals in Detroit, MI, and elsewhere.
- Josh Trautwein, co-founder and CEO of About Fresh, a Boston, MA-based organization that makes healthy food available to communities in need.

"We commend all the candidates for this year's prize and congratulate the finalists," says John Maxfield, executive director of the Wilmers Integrity Prize. "Learning about the work all of the candidates and finalists are doing in their communities has been an inspiration to everyone involved in the prize."

The winner for this year's prize will be announced at an event in New York City on October 4, 2021.

About the Robert G. Wilmers Integrity Prize

The Robert G. Wilmers Integrity Prize was established in 2018 to honor the life and legacy of Robert G. Wilmers, the late chairman and CEO of M&T Bank Corp. The annual \$50,000 award recognizes individuals who are working anywhere in the United States to make a positive difference in the world around them. To learn more about the prize, please visit our website at www.wilmersintegrityprize.org.

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