



## Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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### **Karen Tibbetts of Gloucester Recognized as 2024 Commonwealth Heroine**

BOSTON – Karen Tibbetts of Gloucester has been honored as a member of the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women’s Commonwealth Heroines Class of 2024. State Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante (D-Gloucester) recommended Tibbetts for this recognition because of her lifelong dedication to promoting Cape Ann’s waterfront, art, and culture.

The Commonwealth Heroines are women who don’t make the news, but make all the difference in their communities. They use their time, talent, spirit, and enthusiasm to enrich the lives of others in their community. They are mentors, volunteers, and innovators - they are the glue that keeps a community together. The Class of 2024 Commonwealth Heroines comprises more than 125 women from across the state, leaders in industry, business, nonprofit, advocacy, and more.

**"Karen is a tireless advocate for Cape Ann’s historic waterfront and culture, whose passion and dedication have been instrumental in preserving and promoting the unique heritage of our community," said Ferrante. "Her work embodies the spirit of service and commitment that defines a Commonwealth Heroine. I am proud to recommend her for this well-deserved recognition."**

Working as a dockmaster for 17 years, Tibbetts promoted Gloucester as a destination for oceangoing travelers, bringing dozens of boats into Gloucester every weekend with great economic benefits to the local economy and small businesses. Before Wicked Tuna made headlines for the tuna fishery, she founded the North Shore Community Tuna Association, lobbying and testifying before Congress on the economic impact of the tuna fishery.

Recently, Tibbetts volunteered with Gloucester 400+, celebrating Gloucester’s 400th anniversary, serving as a member of the Steering Committee and as co-chair of the Marine and Waterways Committee. She organized the recognition of Gloucester Fisheries Heritage Month and the Gloucester Fisheries Heritage Festival on Jodrey State Fish Pier in August of 2023. She currently serves on the

Waterways Board for the City of Gloucester, which establishes policies and regulations for Gloucester's waterways.

As an advocate for arts, Tibbetts was a key figure in providing for a permanent home for the Rocky Neck Art Colony, helping to secure state and private funding for the purchase of the building on Wonson Street. She has organized many artistic and cultural exhibitions, including most recently the Gruppe Family Legacy Art Exhibition at Gloucester City Hall in 2023, which was attended by more than 2,000 residents, as well as curating a showing of 14 Cape Ann artists in the Senate lobby at the State House in Boston in 2019.

Tibbetts was instrumental in restoration of historic cannons at Stage Fort Park and placement of a cannon from the USS Constitution in Gloucester, gifted to the city in recognition of the many Gloucestermen who served aboard the vessel. She has been a liaison between the community and the USS Constitution for 20 years. She has attended the vessel's ceremonies, awarded the Gloucester 400+ medal to its first female commander, and brought sailors to Gloucester Public Schools to educate local students on the history and importance of the USS Constitution.

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women celebrated the 21st Annual Commonwealth Heroines Class of 2024 on Friday, June 14, 2024 at the State House in Boston. For additional information regarding this event, please contact the MCSW at 617-626-6520 or email [mcsw@mass.gov](mailto:mcsw@mass.gov).

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