

Patricia Foley Karl Square Dedication Ceremony
November 13, 2020

Remarks for Mom's Dedication_KK

Good morning.

I would like to first recognize and thank Mayor Rivera and honored officials representing Lawrence for this wonderful recognition and event for which we gather today.

On behalf of the Karl and Foley families, it is an honor to stand before you to recognize my mother, Patricia Foley Karl and celebrate her life and work with this dedication at the corner of Haverhill and West streets, in her name -in Lawrence, the community where she was born, and that she loved.

Family, Education, Community, Service

These were the pillars of my mother's life and work. Today this place will become a reminder and symbol of those tenets.

Family

The love of family was paramount to my mom's operating agenda. She celebrated her family - the Foley Family from Tower Hill -with its eight children, its stories and its traditions.

She embraced her married family -my dad, the Karl's and the Ashley's.

She celebrated her extended family -the Killeens, the Wheelers, the "in-laws", "the out-laws", the cousins, the grandkids and the friends from first grade.

She honored where our family had come from -all its history, its cultures and its traditions.

She believed in family dinners at our home on Johnson Street, Foley Family Functions, Christmas parties, Feaster Five Thanksgiving brunches, Fourth of Julys at Vin & Jeanne's beach house and cookouts at Justine's pool.

She celebrated sporting events, music concerts, dance recitals, birthdays, graduations, weddings and baby showers. It was family time large and small that my mom relished, like making art and baking chocolate cookies with her grandchildren.

Connections, conversation, support and joy.

Family mattered because it was where values and ideals were introduced and fostered and offered a circle of love and support you could depend on.

Our family circle, she believed -the more the merrier, the more the better, the more the stronger.

Education

If you are standing here today as a schoolmate, student, fellow educator, sibling, child or grandchild of Patricia Foley Karl— you know first-hand the high value she placed on an education and the higher bar she set in believing in you to reach your potential.

She knew dreams could become realities for those with a solid education, a hard work ethic, and the right support.

As a parent, teacher and administrator she dedicated her energy to ensuring educational excellence and opportunity was available to everyone.

Her work began as a volunteer teacher in Arizona, continued at the Sanborn and AB Bruce schools, NECCUM, Lawrence Youth Commission, the education and service programs of City CORE and Youth Build. She introduced programs for English Language learners and Citizenship.

-And her most passionate undertaking, the founding of the Lawrence Family Development Charter School and foundation - committed to creating and sustaining an environment where every child has the opportunity to acquire the foundational skills and habits of mind that foster a love of lifelong learning, citizenship participation, and personal fulfillment.

My mom believed that an educated and committed citizenry was fundamental to ensuring our freedom and prosperity as a society.

Community

My mom saw beyond personal success. Her values, her goals were for our collective success and betterment.

She was from my earliest memories active in the community -taking on leadership roles, helping with election campaigns, charities and fundraisers, and supporting events that nurtured museums, music, and the arts.

My mom was committed to valuing all members of a community. She believed our diversity in all its regards has the potential to make us better, richer and a more vibrant people and – in turn together build a better place to live, to work and to grow up.

Service

Non Sibi, "not for oneself". That was my mom's motivation and reward.

Her life experiences even as a young child were about more than self. As the oldest in a family of eight -it could not possibly be just about the individual. But fundamentally it was not a Foley trait, my mom gained her gratitude and service ethic from her parents Vincent and Genevieve Foley.

Service started early supporting the war effort as a child while her dad was stationed overseas.

It continued by serving as a volunteer teacher after graduating from college -then as a parent volunteer, as a troop leader, a chaperone and a CCD teacher.

Later, she built homes for those in need with Habitat for Humanity and in the Dominican Republic with Adelante's Misión Joven.

My mom served on boards and foundations she believed in and honored their missions with integrity.

And my mom volunteered her late nights and early mornings, as far back as my middle school years, to write grants and raise funds to support the important work of good organizations - this work became that much more important to her when the physical act of helping was no longer possible.

Family, Education, Community, Service

This is my mom; this is Patricia Foley Karl.

We are honored to have this square dedicated in her name.

For those that knew her – as you pass it – may it put a smile in your heart and a good memory in your soul.

For those who will never meet my mom, may this place and its name – be an invitation to get to know her – through the ideals and values she held, and demonstrated in her life’s work.

For all of us -may it be a reminder to serve as stewards of her legacy-

A commitment to family, to excellence in education, to pride and inclusivity of community, and service to our greater good.

Thank you.