



**Roberto L. DaSilva**  
Mayor

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*Note to Editors: Please see attached photos with IDs*

**City unveils “Portraits of a City” honoring local community leaders**

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI – The City of East Providence unveiled three new portraits at City Hall honoring four members of the community who have gone above and beyond for the City of East Providence.

“We are thrilled to have such wonderful participation from the community on selecting four, truly wonderful members of our community to be featured as “Portraits of a City,” because these individuals represent all of the great work and dedication that goes on in the City of East Providence,” Mayor Bob DaSilva said.

East Providence-based artist Jennifer Gillooly Cahoon recently completed a series of paintings titled “Portraits of a City,” recognizing the four important figures.

Her initial work is of Dr. Isadore Ramos, a product of the city’s school system, a superb athlete as a young man who later became a noted administrator and elected official in East Providence, serving as the council’s first African-American president/ceremonial mayor. A formal unveiling of the piece took place during the Nov. 5, 2019 City Council meeting.

Cahoon, a self-taught painter, former Art teacher at East Providence High School and owner of the HeARTspot gallery on Pawtucket Avenue, received a Rhode Island State Council on the Arts grant to begin the project.

“It was a long time in the making but I think it was worthwhile as these are here for the long haul now,” Cahoon said. “This really was a labor of love.”

She completed the series, with support from a Legislative Grant procured by former Rep. and now Secretary of State Gregg Amore (who recused himself from being a portrait subject), with portraits of the following members of our community:

**David Kelleher**, a former East Providence elementary school principal, is a noted historian in East Providence for many years and is the 2016 and 2022 winner of the Antoinette F. Dowling Volunteer Award for Historic Preservation in Rhode Island. Dave took on extracurricular preservation projects, working with the Historical Society to preserve a historic amusement park building and the pumping station at Hunt’s Mills. With the East Providence Land Conservation Trust, Mr. Kelleher helped to save historic Bridgham Farm. Some of his other initiatives included a demolition delay ordinance, saving historic Weaver House, and establishing the new Historic District Commission. Mr. Kelleher has focused years of his life to the historic Pomham Rocks Lighthouse. Mr. Kelleher co-established the Friends of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse in 2004 to restore the endangered building and has been working on programs and projects to support the lighthouse since.

**Mildred Morris** – Ms. Morris has devoted her adult life working with children in East Providence, especially in the school department. She has served on many committees that support the children in our community. She was first elected to the East Providence School Committee in 1996 and served for 12 years. During her time on the committee, Morris was named as a committee clerk, vice-chair and board chairperson by her fellow committee members. She has been active in several volunteer groups, including the Crescent Park Carousel Commission and the Friends of Townie Athletics Organization. As vice president of the Friends of Townie Athletics Organization (FTAO), Morris has helped provide East Providence High School and middle school student-athletes with college scholarships, annual banquets, trophies, awards and equipment. Morris not only served on the East Providence High School Hall of Fame, but was also an inductee in 2015.

In 2015, Morris was honored by State and City Democrats at the local annual Democratic Spring Fling dinner party. Then City democratic chair John Faria praised her many volunteer efforts within East Providence.

**Valerie Perry**, a third-generation Townie, is a member of the East Providence / Seekonk Rotary Club and former District Governor of Rotary District 7950. As a local rotarian, Perry's leadership has resulted in an annual Back-Pack Fair, providing back packs and school supplies to East Providence elementary school children; Boys and Girls Club Christmas Party, providing gifts and pictures with Santa; and Scholarship program which provided \$1,000 Scholarships to students of East Providence High School, Career and Technical School, Bay View Academy, and Seekonk High Schools. Perry exemplifies leadership and dedication through her many roles in the city helping residents and families. Perry, a former East Providence City Clerk, dedicated years of service to the city. She also dedicated years of service to the students of the city as the former secretary to the assistant superintendent of curriculum with the East Providence School Department.



L to R (Paula Totten, Pam Santos (daughters of Mildred Morris who could not be in attendance),  
Artist Jennifer Cahoon, Valerie Perry, David Kelleher and Mayor Bob DaSilva