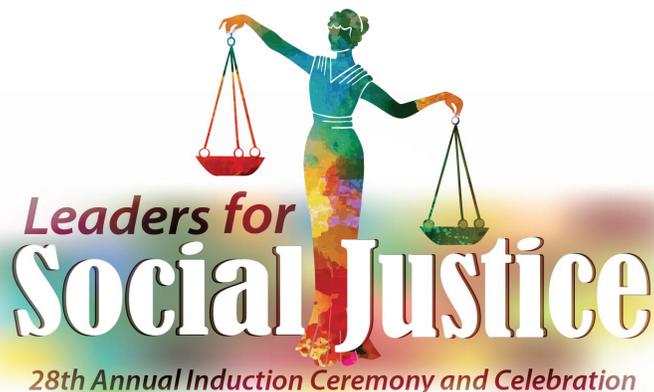




CONNECTICUT
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HALL OF FAME
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SPOTLIGHT RECIPIENT

Donna Berman | In 2001, when Donna took the helm at Charter Oak Cultural Center, the organization was in a state of ruin and on the verge of closing its doors permanently. Donna breathed new life into the organization and today Charter Oak has become one of the area's most vibrant multi-cultural arts centers. Donna instituted Charter Oak's policy of never turning anyone away for lack of funds. Through her vision, leadership and commitment to social justice, she has made Charter Oak Cultural Center a haven for diverse groups to enjoy multi-cultural arts and explore the burning issues of our day.

Donna started Charter Oak's youth programming in 2001 with four students because the children in our neighborhood wanted to learn to dance. It became clear that no-cost, non-audition-based out-of-school time arts programming is largely unavailable to young people in our community. Under her leadership, Charter Oak determined our mission would be best served by offering high-quality classes in the arts to these students who need it the most. Today, Charter Oak is still one of the only organizations in Hartford to provide youth art programming completely free of charge to all who wish to enter the program. In 2012, the program was selected as a finalist by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, distinguishing it as one of the top arts and humanities-based youth programs in the country.

Donna was awarded the 2012 Elizabeth L. Mahaffey Arts Administration Fellowship through Connecticut's Department of Community and Economic Development. She was also highlighted as one of Hartford Magazine's 2012 Amazing Women and recently named one of Greater Hartford's 12 most influential people, also by Hartford Magazine, along with individuals such as Governor Dannel Malloy, Mayor Pedro Segarra and Jim Calhoun. In the spring of 2010, Donna received the Human Relations Award from the National Conference for Community and Justice. In June 2010, she graduated from Hartford Family Institute's training program in body-centered Gestalt therapy. In 2009, she was given the Dance Pioneer Award by Trinity College and in the spring of 2007 she was honored by American Friends Service Committee for her work in social justice. In 2006, Rabbi Berman received Leadership Greater Hartford's Polaris Award in arts and culture.