

## **Renee Kumor receives inaugural Dot Marlow award**

**By Rebecca Walter**

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Selfless, passionate and empowering are just a few of the words encapsulating the legacy of the late Dot Marlow and the recipient of an inaugural award in her honor— Renee Kumor.

Kumor received the first Dot Marlow Philanthropic Catalyst Award Monday night at the Community Foundation of Henderson County's annual Vintage Carolina gala fundraiser.

The most heartfelt and special part of the recognition is that it honors her late friend, Kumor said. She and Marlow, who is often referred to as the founding lady of CFHC, worked together many times over the years.

"She was such a leader in our community," Kumor said of Marlow, who died in July 2017. "It is only appropriate she be remembered and acknowledged for her leadership. Crafting this award is what the Community

Foundation has done to respect the work she did."

The CFHC saw the award as an opportunity to not only honor Marlow, but dedicated members of the community like Kumor.

In remarks before the recognition was presented, chairperson of the CFHC board of directors Cindy Causby commended Kumor for her decades of local leadership and advocacy with nonprofits. She was specifically praised for championing local human services and children's and women's causes, and for her generosity of time and talent through volunteering.

"This year's recipient is not simply a leader, but a faithful leader of 40 years selflessly giving her time," Causby said in her remarks. "Others cannot help but be pulled in because of the recipient's selfless approach and personality."

The Vintage Carolina theme this year was "Heroes of Hope" and focused on celebrating local heroes like Kumor.

CFHC made a call out to the community for nominations for the inaugural award. Recipients were to "exemplify selfless volunteer leadership in philanthropic work for our community's greater good, remaining engaged with commitment and determination to accomplish results that will help others create a better future ...," according to the nomination description.

"I think Renee is the perfect recipient of the first Dot Marlow Philanthropic Catalyst Award," said McCray Benson, CFHC president/CEO. "She has dedicated so much of her life to community, working with a number of nonprofit organizations from their nascent beginnings and sticking with them until they've become some of the foremost nonprofits in this community."

Reflecting on Marlow's legacy and the growth of local nonprofits, Kumor said her friend was always able to calm a discussion and allow everyone's voice to be heard. That mindset has helped steer nonprofits into growth.

"(Dot) knew life was not static and that you had to be prepared to look in the future and make certain a need would find a home and place to be served no matter how it looked 20 years ago," Kumor said.

Organizations like the CFHC and the nonprofits it supports have seen an increase in community efforts over the years and are looking at the bigger picture, Kumor explained.

"There is now a lot more discussion and cooperation and even program partnering with nonprofits in our community," she added.

One touching moment after receiving the honor, Kumor said, was speaking with Marlow's daughters — Valorie Marlow Songer and Dottie Marlow Kinlaw — and Marlow's granddaughter, Julie Songer Belman. Kumor sees a part of Dot live on through her family.

"You just look at their faces and there is Dot's smile. People that know Dot's smile and laugh will see the resemblance," Kumor said. "She smiles back at me through her daughters."